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Hafa Adai!

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'We are Marianas-strong'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

With the Commonwealth still reeling from the wreckage of Super Typhoon Yutu that hit just a little over two months ago, the CNMI swore in yesterday Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to a fresh four-year term at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

» Torres, Palacios sworn in as governor, lt. governor

CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro administered the oath of office for Torres while Palacios took his oath with Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja. Castro also administered the oath for all House members while Naraja did the same on the side of the Senate.

Festivities began on Saturday with the #MarianasStrong inaugural concert at the Marianas Business Plaza, while a Red Mass was held on Sunday for all elected officials at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral.

The venue of the Torres-Palacios

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CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro administers the oath of office for Gov. Ralph DLG Torres yesterday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville, as first lady Diann Torres holds up a Bible. JON PEREZ

REPORTERS' NOTEBOOK

Former representative Angel A. Demapan will be returning to the Executive Branch after Gov. Ralph DLG Torres appointed him as the administration's new chief of staff.

The two-term lawmaker worked at the Governor's Office as press secretary of the late governor Eloy S. Inos and former governor Benigno R. Fitial.

He was one of the six representatives of Precinct 1 for two terms in the 19th and 20th Legislature. *(Jon Perez)*

▪ ▪ ▪

The Torres administration is still going through all the compiled reports submitted by the transition committee after reviewing all agencies, boards, commissions, department, instrumentalities, public corporations, or other entities of the CNMI government.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres asked for the courtesy resignation of all Cabinet members, agency heads, and board members. Courtesy resignations have been a standard operating procedure to give the incoming administration a free hand to decide on who would be

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BOE confirms new Hopwood campus

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Board of Education confirmed yesterday that they have decided to move the Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Middle School campus from its Afetnas campus to a lot in As Perdido.

BOE chair Marylou Ada said in an interview that the BOE's first Capital Improvement Project would be the construction of a new Hopwood Middle School campus from the ground up.

"We need a new middle school, but we first have to designate a new public land for that purpose," she said, adding that the new campus is expected to be built within three to four years. "It's going to be a big building because we have to house about 1,000 students and we would have a library and cafeteria. We are

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Lifoifoi resigns from CPA board after 16 years

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Citing health concerns, Jose R. Lifoifoi has resigned as a member of the Commonwealth Ports Authority board, where he served for 16 years, 14 of which as chairman.

Lifoifoi, 82, confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that he submitted his resignation letter to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres recently and that it took effect last Jan. 7.

"It was a resignation and not just a courtesy resignation," said Lifoifoi in an interview yesterday at the inauguration ceremony for Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Lifoifoi and his wife, Cecilia, were among the guests at the ceremony.

He said he spoke first with Torres

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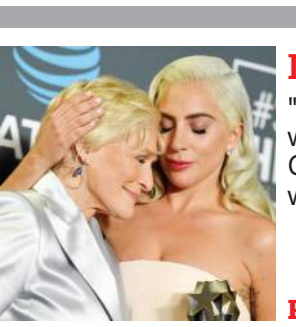

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Local

Apatang remembers Tonie at his 2nd inauguration

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Re-elected Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang paid tribute to his late wife, Tonie, during his second inauguration ceremony yesterday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan

Apatang attributed much of his success in his first term as mayor to Tonie.

"My late wife…left me halfway through my first term and she helped me a lot in the beginning before she got sick and she passed away from cancer on Dec. 12, 2017," he said. "That's why it is very emotional for me. It's still fresh in my mind and in my heart."

Apatang said he regrets that Tonie was not there to witness his second inauguration but he wants to thank her for all she did for him up until her passing.

"It's a very sad thing for me because we always hope that our partners will be around for achievements like this. It's very hard work and you need the support of your partner…so I just want to say 'thank you' for everything she did for me," he said.

Apatang also thanked those who continue to support him and gave him another chance to serve the Commonwealth.

"I am very grateful to our people, the supporters who really believed in me to continue to serve them for the next four years. I am not getting any younger but I can still do the job, my mind is still fresh and I'm ready to serve them. My office is always open for anybody, regardless of who comes in and needs assistance. I'm there for them," he said.

Apatang said he is also excited for the things he has planned for the Commonwealth in the next four years, saying there are still a lot of things "that I want to accomplish."

That includes the home numbering system.

"I've been pushing for it since my last term. I think we will go ahead with that. We have funding already and the contract has been routed…I am waiting for the [Federal Emergency Management Agency] to do the environmental assessment. Once that's complete, we will go full force and I look forward to working with our governor, the Legislature, and the local delegation," he said.

Apatang said his office continues to be busy with clearing post-typhoon debris.

"We're still working with our FEMA partners. …We're continuing our recovery. As a matter of fact, tomorrow is the deadline for debris removal for FEMA. …We will try to finish all that we need to do to get our recovery back on track," he said.

The 15th Saipan and Northern Island's Municipal Council members also took their oath of office during Apatang's inauguration ceremony.

The 15th Saipan and Northern Island's Municipal Council consists of three newly sworn members. The council members are Debra Lynn Tenorio Camacho, Antonia Manibusan Tudela, and Ana Demapan Castro.

Re-elected Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang takes his oath of office administered by Supreme Court Associate Justice John Manglona during his inauguration ceremony yesterday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

The 15th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council takes the oath of office administered by Supreme Court Associate Justice John Manglona during their inauguration ceremony yesterday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

IN POLICE BRUTALITY SUIT OVER BEATING CAUGHT BY VIDEO

Manibusan certifies that two cops acted within scope of employment

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Attorney General Edward Manibusan has certified that the two police officers in a police brutality lawsuit that was later caught on video acted within the scope of their employment at the time of the incident in 2016.

With the certification, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona ordered Thursday that police officers Carlo Evangelista and Stanley Patris be substituted as defendants by the Commonwealth in Vincent San Nicolas Norita's claims of assault and battery, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and negligence.

Manibusan filed last Sept. 7 the notices certifying that both Evangelista and Patris were acting within the scope of employment at the time of the incident alleged in Norita's complaint.

Norita was slapped with a nine-year prison term in May 2017 for leading police officers in a 40-minute car chase in 2016. He filed last August a police brutality lawsuit in federal court against the Department of Public Safety, DPS Commissioner Robert A. Guerrero, and police officers Evangelista and Patris.

In his lawsuit, Norita, through counsel Rene C. Holmes, asked the court to hold the defendants liable to pay him damages.

Last Thursday, Manglona dismissed DPS from Norita's lawsuit and dismissed for lack of jurisdiction Norita's causes of action—assault and battery against Evangelista and Patris; intentional infliction of emotional distress against all defendants; and negligence against all defendants.

Manglona also dismissed for lack of jurisdiction constitutional claim against DPS, Guerrero, and 10 unnamed co-defendants.

With the dismissal, remaining causes of action in the lawsuit are Section 1983 claim (deprivation of rights) against the Commonwealth and official capacity defendants, in so far as it is for injunctive or declaratory relief only; and the Section 1983 claim against Evangelista and Patris, in their personal capacities (and official capacities, in so far as it is for injunctive or declaratory relief only).

The third remaining cause of action is Norita's CNMI constitutional claim against Evangelista and Patris in their personal capacities.

Manglona dismissed all remaining three claims without prejudice.

Dismiss without prejudice means Norita can re-file the three claims.

In her order last Thursday, Manglona said the Commonwealth Employees Liability Reform and Tort Compensation Act was enacted to protect government employees from the expense of defending lawsuits arising out of acts performed within the scope of their employment.

Manglona said both CELTRA and the Federal Employees Liability Reform and Tort Compensation Act protect government employees by authorizing the AG to certify that an employee was acting within the scope of employment.

The judge said after certification, the government is substituted for the employee in the lawsuit and the proceeding continues in the same manner as any action against the government.

Manglona said once the government has been substituted, the litigation is thereafter governed by the Government Liability Act.

Manglona said Evangelista and Patris were both employed as police officers by DPS at all times relevant to this lawsuit.

The judge said Evangelista and Patris, along with other DPS officers, pursued and arrested Norita after a failed traffic stop.

Manglona said the facts as alleged by Norita indicate that Evangelista and Patris were engaged in police work at the time of the conduct in question.

Holmes stated in the complaint that on the evening of Dec. 9, 2016, a police officer saw a white car being driven fast on Beach Road.

The officer attempted a traffic stop on the car, which was driven by Norita. The passenger was Joe E. Ada.

Other officers joined in a pursuit of Norita and Ada, including officers Patris and Evangelista.

The lawyer said a bystander filmed Patris' and Evangelista's excessive beating of Norita and Ada with their batons.

Holmes said as a result, Norita suffered severe injuries on his head, back, arm, and leg.

Five agencies honored at inauguration concert

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

Concert-goers enjoy the 2019 inauguration concert last Saturday evening at the Marianas Business Plaza parking area.
ERWIN ENCINARES

In keeping with the name #Marianas STRONG, the Torres administration's inauguration concert last Saturday evening at the Marianas Business Plaza parking lot honored five agencies that were among the earliest to work with the CNMI government in response to Super Typhoon Yutu in late October 2018.

The five are the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, American Red Cross, Marianas Young Professionals, and The Salvation Army.

Present to receive the plaques of appreciation were FEMA deputy regional administrator Bill Roche, DoD coordinating officer Harry Elliot, ARC-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsh, MYP executive director Gerard Van Gils, and Salvation Army soup kitchen program coordinator Annie Lizama.

In his short remarks, Roche said: "It's a tremendous honor for FEMA and our fellow partners to be here supporting all of the survivors of Typhoon Yutu. …It has been an unbelievable experience so far."

Last Saturday marked the 80th day since Typhoon Yutu pummeled the CNMI.

"We have a lot of work to do and a lot of work has been done up to this day. We are super appreciative of the patience and resilience of the CNMI population that was affected and everybody else. We are here for the long haul," added Roche.

Elliott thanked the people of the CNMI in his short message. "…I want to [thank everyone] for welcoming the soldiers and sailors that come here to help you return to a new normal," he said. "It is one of the most humbling undertakings any member of the U.S. military can ever take—to help a fellow American [regain] life from one of the worst days we have ever faced."

Hirsh, Van Gils, and Lizama all had similar messages of gratitude to the CNMI and the Torres administration for recognizing their efforts in restoring normalcy after Supewr Typhoon Yutu.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who also spoke at the event, said there are other companies and non-profit organizations that are helping with the recovery from Super Typhoon Yutu, but the five organizations were the first responders "so to speak, as they had their teams out since Day 1."

"I want to say thank you to everyone who has contributed one way or the other and to everyone who is continuing to contribute," he said. "…At the end of the day it is the friendship that we have [that counts], and I cannot ask for a better friendship than what we have with our partners."

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Humanities awards on Thursday

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council will be hosting the 21st Governor's Humanities Awards at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant on Thursday, Jan. 24, starting at 11am. ***(PR)***

Kagman PTSA meeting today

The Kagman cluster of schools will be having a Parents Teachers Students Association meeting today, Jan. 15, 2019 at 5:30pm at the Chacha Ocean View Middle School cafeteria. Call the school at 237-3921, 664-4100, or 664-3911 if you have any questions or concerns. ***(PR)***

Today is final sweep for typhoon debris

Today is the final sweep of all typhoon debris. As the men and women clearing the way for final sweeps throughout the villages, they ask that residents do not throw their household garbage into the storm debris piles. After Jan. 15, 2019, any household garbage found alongside the public right-of-way will be considered littering. This illegal dumping will result in fines in accordance with the CNMI Litter Control Regulations. ***(BECQ)***

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EXPLORE YOUR WORLD
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‘Compromise to move NMI forward’

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Almost all members of the House of Representatives hewed to one message in their opening speeches yesterday, saying that collaboration and compromise would help move legislation that would benefit the people of the CNMI as the Commonwealth continues to recover from Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu.

All 19 members—incumbents, returning, and rookies—also took turns honoring the late representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan), who passed away last Jan. 6 while visiting family on Tinian. They remembered the former vice speaker as a lawmaker who would meticulously study every piece of legislation before casting his vote.

Vice speaker Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) said the House must work in spirit and in harmony. “Together we can strive in a unified common goal for the betterment of our great Commonwealth.”

Richard T. Lizama (Ind-Saipan), one of the seven rookie lawmakers, vowed to focus his efforts in working with the other members of the 21st Legislature. “We are not divided by party, we are unified by our desire to work for our own people of the Commonwealth.”

Rep. Roman C. Benavente (R-Saipan), one of three lawmakers returning in this Legislature, said, “We might have differences in various areas but let’s be collective to serve the people.”

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

LIFOIFOI

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before submitting his resignation.

Lifoifoi said his wife just had a major operation on her back. “I have my own health problem too—arthritis,” he said.

Leaving CPA after serving the board for 16 years leaves Lifoifoi with mixed feelings.

“I’m sad but, at the same time…Nobody is taking care of us in the house. Only me and her,” said Lifoifoi, pointing to his wife.

In his letter to Torres dated Jan. 7, 2019, Lifoifoi said his wife needs his full assistance. He needs to accompany his wife to Manila, Philippines for a series of medical checkups required by her doctor.

“I am grateful to the past and present CPA board members, management and staff for their full cooperation and confidence in me during my term,” Lifoifoi said.

He thanked Torres for his trust and support during his term as CPA chairman.

Cecilia Lifoifoi said her husband’s resignation is very timely as she needs him to assist her in her personal needs and to accompany her to Manila for her medical checkups in succeeding months.

She said her husband is also due for a knee operation.

“I have no relative to take care of me on Saipan except for him,” Cecilia Lifoifoi said.

Lifoifoi first served as CPA board chairman in May 2002. He last attended a CPA board meeting in February 2018. Last Dec. 18, the CPA board of directors elected Kimberlyn-King Hinds as its new board chairperson, replacing chair Lifoifoi.

The CPA directors had already tendered their courtesy resignation letters to Torres.

WE ARE

From Page 1

inauguration yesterday wasn’t lost on the two as the southern part of Saipan and the whole of Tinian were hit hardest by Super Typhoon Yutu in late October last year.

To this end, Torres and Palacios vowed to devout their combined efforts in helping the CNMI rebuild and recover not only from Yutu but also Typhoon Mangkhut that slammed into Rota in September.

In his inaugural address, Torres said that both disasters changed how he views the Commonwealth. “I think I am seeing the most awful sight in the world: One of our families, sheltering in a tent, surrounded by a destroyed home. The common sight is so painful that sometimes I feel like I can’t open my eyes without seeing someone suffering. There is always a problem that needs immediate attention.

“In dark and difficult moments, I look to our lagoon for peace. The fish are still swimming. The waves are still rolling, and the tides are right in time. The sunset is still perfect in the Marianas. Returning to those same families, I saw things differently because I focused on the people rather than the destruction.”

He added that he now sees the CNMI differently. “I saw a young man who lost his home, only to head right back out to volunteer to distribute food to his neighbors. I saw a public school teacher, living in one shelter and then commuting to work as a shelter manager in another village. I saw children playing, parents cooking, and singers singing.”

Seeing the strength of the people of the CNMI, Torres said he now sees a great opportunity—“the opportunity of this recovery, the responsibility to lead in service; you have given me a tremendous gift. In electing me and Lt. Gov. Palacios, our people have chosen us to lead in difficult times with hope, strength, and unity.”

“In the peaceful times of my childhood, in the difficult days of today, our people are stronger than any storm. We are Marianas-strong! We will rebuild from this typhoon, we will be stronger for the next. We accept the help and friendship of those who came in our hour of need. To all our partners in Micronesia, we will be there for you, should the need ever arise.”

Torres said new beginning symbolizes every inauguration day. “I hope we will all welcome a fresh start, a new approach, even as we face problems that are familiar. Today begins an opportunity to improve our government and improve our Commonwealth. At this time, we all have a chance to rebuild. In guiding this administration, I pledge to keep the values we share as a community. We will look after our neighbors, and we will take care of our Commonwealth.”

Progress in recovery

Palacios echoed almost the same sentiments, with high hopes for the new administration after the CNMI endured the devastation brought by Mangkhut and Yutu. “We are on the road to recovery. While we still have a long way to go, progress is underway. Much is expected of our new administration. Gov. Torres and I accept the challenges this extraordinary time presents and vow to lead the Commonwealth to a new future.”

“Make no mistake. The task at hand is monumental. Before Oct. 25, 2018, we had a thriving economy full of opportunities, the promise of more ventures, growth and progress. We paid down our debt, made good on our promise to retirees, gave our education and healthcare systems record-setting funding, and improved the delivery of utilities to our communities.”

Mangkhut and Yutu ravaged the islands in September and October, the latter being the strongest weather disturbance to hit the U.S. soil.

“Just as we were putting 2015 and Typhoon Soudelor behind us, we are brought back to square one but, in more profoundly difficult circumstances,” said Palacios.

“[Yutu] spared no one. Every household has experienced loss of property in one form or another. For all that we have gone through, we still must count ourselves lucky and in many ways, blessed. As a member of the American family, we have received relief supplies and aid from our fellow Americans whose generosity is unmatched in the world.”

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Armed Forces, Army Corps of Engineers, and the Guam government with the Guam Power Authority were swift in providing aid and other types of assistance.

“Then came the helping hands in rebuilding damaged homes and our public infrastructure. We are grateful for the many women and men, from near and far, in uniform and in the private sector, who arrived in less-than-ideal conditions. They hit the ground running to fulfill their mission,” said Palacios.

“We also thank the generosity of our neighbors in Micronesia—the Federated States of Micronesia government for its generous financial assistance and Kosrae State [for] its line crew who helped restore power in the hard-hit communities in southern Saipan. We will never forget their time and sacrifice in our hour of need. Their presence eased our worries and lifted our spirits as we felt the kind words of comfort and reassurance of help on the way.”

Rebuilding the CNMI is now everyone’s responsibility, now that those who came to the Commonwealth’s aid are returning home. “Let me recognize the countless men and women of the Commonwealth so many to mention who gave more than a hundred percent of their time and energy to the recovery effort. They put in long hours knowing that the public’s health, safety and welfare are at stake and quick action is critical in natural disasters. They responded magnificently to the recovery effort.”

REPORTERS

From Page 1

retained or let go. ***(Jon Perez)***

■ ■ ■

Officials from the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, and Palau attended yesterday’s inauguration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios at the NMIFA Soccer Training Facility in Koblerville.

FSM President Peter M. Christian, Guam Gov. Lou Deleon Guerrero, and Palau President Tommy Remengesau were in attendance as well as other top officials of their respective branches of government.

Sen. Tina Muna-Barnes, the Speaker of the 35th Guam Legislature and the second female to hold the post, was joined by fellow lawmakers Sens. Kelly Marsh-Taitano, Amanda Shelton, Louisa Muna, and Wil Castro. ***(Jon Perez)***

■ ■ ■

Two members of the Refaluwasch Warriors blew the *sawi* or conch at the start of the inauguration ceremony for Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios yesterday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville, providing a warm, thrilling, and far-reaching signal to start the ceremonies. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

■ ■ ■

The Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblervile turned out to be the perfect venue for the inauguration ceremony for Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios. Many noticed that the green field gave a pleasing contrast to the red carpet and the colorful stage. The breeze was also cool, providing dignitaries and the crowd with wonderful weather despite the blazing sun. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

■ ■ ■

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio officiated Board of Education member Andrew Orsini's oath-taking. Orsini did not place his hand on anything as he was taking his oath. Public School System legal counsel Tiberius Mocanu presided over the special meeting as the board chair pro tem and nearly recessed the board meeting without hearing Orsini's special remarks due to a reportedly faulty script. ***(Erwin Encinares)***

■ ■ ■

Newly-sworn in Board of Education member Andrew Orsini was nearly overcome with emotion as he recalled working with Education Commissioner Glenn Muña. Orsini was the Parent Teacher Student Association president of Oleai Elementary School while Muna then was principal. ***(Erwin Encinares)***

■ ■ ■

Board of Education member Andrew Orsini noted in his remarks that everytime he was asked which political party he belonged to, he would reportedly reply, "The children's party." ***(Erwin Encinares)***

■ ■ ■

Despite it being a local inauguration ceremony, many federal personnel showed up in support of Saipan Mayor David Apatang’s inauguration. There were dozens of Army and Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel in attendance.

The 15th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council’s inauguration was merged with Apatang’s inauguration and it was short and quick. The newly elected council members were not even allotted time to give celebratory speeches. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

BOE

From Page 1

starting from scratch, so it would take some time.”

A possible area for consideration is a Parks & Recreation lot in As Perdido, but Ada noted that it was still tentative.

“[Land is limited] now, and we need enough space for physical education and wellness programs for our students, along with enough space to build an auditorium,” she noted.

For financing, Ada hopes the Federal Emergency Management Agency would assist, along with a co-sharing agreement with the Gov. Ralph DLG Torres’ office.

However, the lack of architectural plans for the building, along with the lack of a plot of land that satisfies those needs, is hindering further discussions for the new campus.

Hopwood principal Dr. Rizalina Liwag told *Saipan Tribune* in a previous interview that all of its 10 buildings on campus sustained “major damage,” affecting about 70 rooms in all.

Right now, Hopwood is holding classes in the morning at the Marianas High School campus, but Education Commissioner Glenn Muña noted that they would soon be moving to a new temporary campus near the Koblerville Elementary School once the 42 temporary classrooms are completed.

According to Muña, subcontractors for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working 24 hours a day to complete the temporary structures before February.

“We are expecting to move the students of Hopwood to their new temporary campus…in the first or second week of February [2019],” he told the Board of Education’s Fiscal, Personnel, and Administrative Committee during a meeting Jan. 8, 2019.

ERWIN CHARLES TAN ENCINARES

Newly-sworn in Board of Education member Andrew Orsini poses, center, for a picture with his new colleagues in the BOE and the Public School System leadership.

Orsini to Guerrero: I will listen

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The CNMI State Board of Education witnessed yesterday during a special board meeting the oath-taking of the new Saipan representative, Andrew Orsini, who was sworn into the 16th BOE on Capital Hill.

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio administered the oathtaking.

"I will listen to the advice you gave me," said Orsini during his brief remarks yesterday after taking his oath, addressing outgoing BOE Saipan representative Herman Guerrero, who said in a separate interview that his advice to Orsini was to listen.

"I will continue to listen to our parents, teachers, and students. It is because of listening that I am here today, and listening is what I have been doing," he said.

BOE chair Marylou Ada commended Orsini's optimism, saying, "I was very touched by his speech."

"It's nice to have a breath of fresh air in the BOE, so we are looking forward to working with him," she added.

The Rota representative on the board, Herman Atalig, said in a separate interview that Orsini's experience in the public sector would provide a unique insight to the board's future discussions.

"I know that if we collaborate on any issues…pertaining to our Public School System family, I know that he can contribute…to the BOE, and I definitely welcome him to the board," he said. "I know that he will be a team player for all the students, teachers, and families."

BOE vice chair and third Saipan representative Janice Tenorio predicts that Orsini would be an asset to the BOE.

"[Both Orsini and I] worked at the Civil Service Commission [on] human resources, he is [a former] Commonwealth Utilities Corp. human resources manager," she noted. "He is family, literally. He was an educator, so he is diverse in [his] inputs."

Tenorio noted that Orsini would be insightful in crafting policies relating to human resources and administrative issues due to his past experiences.

"We look forward to his knowledge and teamwork and we would all collaborate in the best interests of the students," she said.

With Orsini sworn in, the 16th BOE lacks just one representative for Tinian; former BOE Tinian representative Florine Hofschneider opted not to seek re-election.

According to Ada, the BOE is expecting a gubernatorial appointment to fill in the slot since nobody ran for the position during the 2018 elections.

"The governor has several names," said Ada, declining to disclose who the candidates are.

Chamber to name BPOY on Saturday

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be selecting on Jan. 19 one of eight nominees the 2018 Business Person of the Year at the annual gala at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom.

The nominees are Gloria Cavanaugh of Pacific Islands Club Saipan; John Hirsh of the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter; Nola Hix of Xerox Corp; Glen Hunter of The Shack; James Lee of Marpac, Inc.; Velma Palacios of IT&E; Ron Smith of Angil Design; and Janice Tenorio of IT&E.

The nominees will be judged by the prior recipients of this award and by the four officers of the Chamber board.

The winner will remain secret until the official announcement at the gala on Jan. 19, 2019.

The Business Person of the Year Gala, formerly known as the Chamber's Installation Dinner, is the organization's largest social event of the year. This year's theme is the "Silver Lining" Gala, in reference to the resilience of the Marianas post-Super Typhoon Yutu as well as the many leaders who have stepped up to further our community's recovery.

Along with "Business Person of the Year," the event will also recognize the "2018 Saipan Young Professional" of the year as well as the Installation of the 2019 board of directors.

Seats to event are limited and available for advance purchase for $100 per person.

To order tickets, email Mercilynn at administrator@saipanchamber.com, call 234-7150, or visit the third floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe for more information. ***(PR)***

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

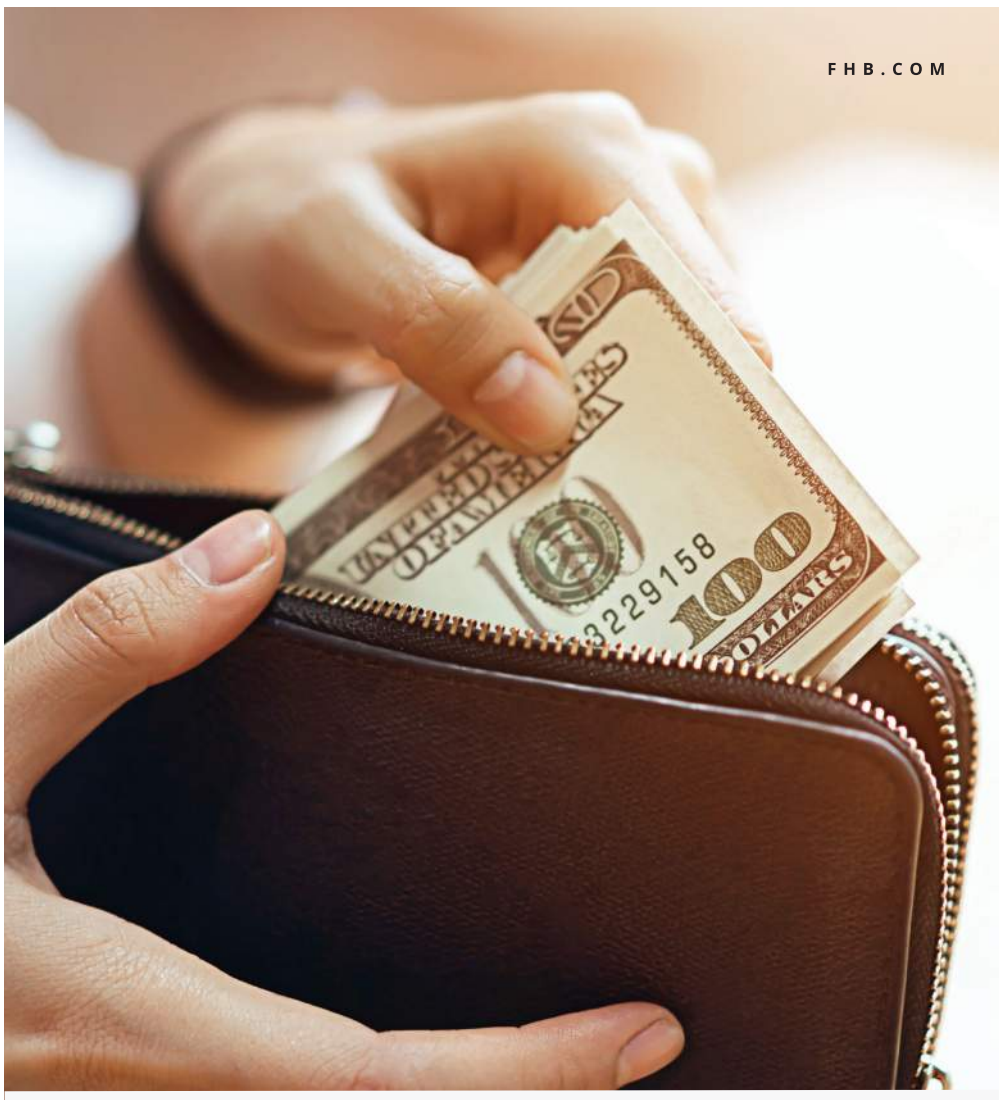
Romalina Maratita, Petitioner, vs. Robinson Welly, Respondent, : FCD-PA CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0438 : **SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION**

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 1283 Rota, MP 96951 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dates this 3rd day of January, 2019.
/s/
Clerk of Court



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Manibusan takes oath for 2nd term as elected AG

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Edward E. Manibusan takes his oath of office as an attorney general before Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja during a ceremony at the Pacific Islands Club's Annex Room. Also in the photo are his wife, Delfina, and their daughter Monica. Manibusan is serving his second four-year term as AG after he ran unopposed last Nov. 13.

Edward E. Manibusan, the first elected attorney general of the CNMI, was sworn in yesterday for his second term in a ceremony at the Pacific Islands Club's Annex Room.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja administered the oath of office for Manibusan, who ran unopposed and obtained over 11,000 votes in the general election last Nov. 13.

Present at the ceremony were Manibusan's wife, Delfina, family members, relatives, and friends, as well as staff of the Office of the Attorney General.

In his remarks, Manibusan reiterated his platform when he first ran in 2014: to make the OAG the best law firm in the region and to make the OAG work for the people.

"I am proud of the work we did the past four years," he said, citing that his office has successfully defended actions and claims against the Commonwealth.

Manibusan said his goal in the months and years ahead is to continue to promote and ensure an open and transparent government.

"I published an Open Government Act pamphlet, which was made available to all the agencies, boards, and commissions to guide them as they perform their duties," he said.

He vowed to ensure that the Open Government law is followed by every agency of the government in his next term.

Manibusan said he will continue to focus his attention on the rule of law, not political agendas or special interest and continue to foster a nonpartisan position on all matters brought to his attention.

With respect to his first term, Manibusan said they championed cases that he believed violated the CNMI Constitution, as in the case relating to conflict between the governor and the attorney general in the exercise of powers and duties.

Citing his lawsuit against Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson, Manibusan said his office took action and successfully litigated against the salary of the Executive and Legislative branches.

He said they brought and settled claims on behalf of the Commonwealth on many different issues, cases involving violation of the CNMI zoning laws, building code, environmental laws, consumer related issues, settled longstanding judgments against the Commonwealth, including land compensation and employment disputes.

He said they brought actions to recover money and property belonging to the people of the Commonwealth.

"We are continuously working on a path of becoming an independent office free from politics and interference as required by our Constitution," Manibusan said.

He said he is proud of where the OAG is today in its relationship with the Executive Branch in the execution of Commonwealth laws.

Manibusan said his overarching goal has and will continue to be the protection and security of citizens. Toward this end, he said he has assembled a strong prosecution team who work with the law enforcement partners to bring violators to justice.

"We will continue our efforts to keep violent and dangerous criminals off our villages and neighborhood," he said, citing that their record in the trial court and appeals to the CNMI Supreme Court are examples to the hard work and dedication of their prosecutors.

Manibusan said while they work to prosecute and convict law violators, they also believe in the rehabilitation of those who deserve a second chance.

Among the actions he considers strides for the OAG in the last four years is the creation of a solicitor section and assignment of an assistant AG to handle consumer issue and complaint.

He said they have drafted legislation for the protection and livelihood of children and drafted legislation dealing with the right to bear arms.

Manibusan said he is proud of the work the OAG and the government have done collectively. "I am ready to serve the people of the Commonwealth once again—to the best of my ability," he said.

Manibusan was sworn in as the first elected AG in the CNMI in January 2015. He is a former judge and presiding judge of the CNMI Superior Court.

The Airstream Café goes mainstream

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

BEA CABRERA

Business partners Glen Hunter and Jasper Van Der Maas flank the team that makes The Airstream Cafe unique, friendly, and offers good service.

With popular restaurant The Shack falling victim to the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu in late October, Glen Hunter saw an opportunity to partner up with Jasper Van Der Maas and, between the two of them, came up with The Airstream Café at the ground floor of Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

"We opened the café shortly after [Super] Typhoon Yutu so it's kind of like a 'silver lining' from the bad storm. Jasper had already set up the café here prior and so I remember that it was here and ready to go," Hunter said.

While The Shack is undergoing repairs, Hunter said The Airstream Café serves an important function of providing employment to the displaced employees of The Shack.

"Our important goal was to get The Airstream Cafe running as quickly as possible to create jobs who were at The Shack. That was the initial mindset because we got staff that…will be out of work for a while," Hunter said.

"That was the push to get it open as fast as possible: to get them employed again because The Shack will be open but it will take a few more weeks. …A few days after the storm, we worked on permitting, licensing, get the power, etc. and so we were able to…get the staff back to work quickly," he added.

The Shack is a popular breakfast and lunch place in Susupe, frequented by both residents and tourists because of its unique and novelty menu entrees.

Van Der Maas said The Airstream Café is a continuation of his dream of opening a different kind of café on Saipan. "Before becoming The Airstream Café, I opened this in 2016 when I was still in high school but when I started, I didn't know anything about running my own business... so I closed down for two years and focused on other things. …I am taking this collaboration as a base to start out something and to do my own thing instead of going to work in an office."

"It was a blessing that Glen came up to me and asked me to open up, so from what he has taught me, I've learned a lot how to do a business and now we are building the system and expanding it. Other plans includes a bar at night [and that] is our next project," he added.

Barely three months old, The Airstream Café carries some food items from The Shack and it is still evolving to become a café that will have its own identity. "Our menu is still evolving as we took a lot of the offerings that we have at The Shack. We kind of knocked them down a little bit in size and minimize the menu offering because we have a smaller space," Hunter said.

"We recreated them here at the Airstream initially because it is the quickest way to get it running. But as time went on, we have been altering, changing, and morphing it. …It's still a work in progress and Jasper and I are excited," Hunter added.

The café was inspired by the Airstream travel trailer—considered an American icon released in the 1930s. "It is not hard to miss us because it is the only Airstream on island. We decided to call it The Airstream Cafe because when I ran the first business, it was called 'Vega' but people still called it the Airstream and so we just went along with what the people are used to calling it," Van Der Maas said.

"My initial goal was to have a coffee shop that carries good coffee, sell coffee-related items, and just try to bring that trend over to Saipan so we get the people to taste good coffee and not just the cheap stuff. Now with the collaboration with Glen, we came up with food menu and it became like an actual café where you can sit down and have some lunch and, at the same time, enjoy our specialized coffee," he added.

Plans to upgrade the facility are in the works as the partners look into developing the café to be able to operate more hours and appeal to all types of customers. "There will be renovations to create a more distinct space to turn it into a bistro or bar and once we get to that stage we will push advertising a little bit. We are getting a handful of [resident] customers...and we get a decent amount of tourists, which is pretty cool because the building itself is a tourist attraction," Hunter said.

"We hope it will grow into a more trendy spot and make tourists to come by and get an authentic one-of-a-kind menu and feel and some of the best coffee on island," he added.

"It's a very warm, good feeling café. We are accessible and parking is not a problem where we are," Van Der Maas said. "Just like what Glen does very well at The Shack is that he gives a lot of love and we want that atmosphere here too."

The Airstream Café is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 2pm. For more information, visit their Facebook page, "The Airstream Café."

Ex JROTC instructor pleads guilty to assaulting cadet

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Ex-Marianas High School Junior Reserves Officers' Training Corps instructor Ernest Ronald Torres has pleaded guilty to assaulting a former student.

During a change of plea hearing last Tuesday, Torres pleaded guilty to one of two charges filed against him following an alleged sexual assault incident back in 2015.

Torres was charged with sexual assault in the second degree and assault and battery. Torres pleaded guilty to assault and battery.

The charge of sexual assault in the second degree was dismissed with prejudice.

The Superior Court sentenced Torres to a total of 59 days imprisonment.

As part of his plea agreement, Torres will also be placed on probation for three years, to have no contact with the victim and to stay at least 1,000 feet away from her, write a letter of apology to the victim, and pay all court costs and fees.

Torres must also pay a $1,000 fine and perform 200 hours of community service.

According to court information, Torres drove the victim, his former cadet, around Saipan in his personal vehicle on May 12, 2015. While on the drive, Torres allegedly touched the victim several times without her consent.

At the time of the incident, the victim was 18 years old.

Probable cause found against man who allegedly punched girlfriend

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has found probable cause to warrant the filing of one of two charges against a man who allegedly punched his girlfriend.

During a preliminary hearing last Wednesday, Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan found probable cause to believe that Lucio Litulumar Saures may have committed the crime of assault and battery but not the disturbing the peace charge.

The 48-year-old Saures was directed to respond to the charge.

Chief public defender Doug Hartig is counsel for Saures.

Saures will be arraigned on Feb. 11; his bail was set at $5,000 but the court has allowed his release if he posts 10 percent of that amount. Saures has already posted bail.

According to police, Saures assaulted his girlfriend at the Sonoda Apartment in Garapan last Jan. 1. Saures allegedly punched his girlfriend in the face during an argument on Jan. 1, 2019, and left her and took their children.

Police were sent to the apartment at 3:29am. Upon arriving at the scene, a police officer met with the victim, identified as Saures' partner.

The victim told police that she was sitting on the curb of the road waiting for the New Year countdown when Saures arrived and allegedly started arguing with her.

The victim said she brought the argument to the back side of the apartment complex so that no one would see them arguing, but Saures allegedly got angrier and punched the victim in the face. Police reported a bruise on the victim's face.

During a follow-up investigation, it was learned that one of the victim's children allegedly witnessed the scene. The 14-year-old child allegedly saw the argument and saw Saures punch the victim and left her unconscious on the ground before taking them away from the apartment.

Saures was arrested at the MIHA housing.

FHB offers financial aid for fed employees

First Hawaiian Bank is providing government employees and contractors affected by the federal government shutdown with a number of customizable options that can provide payment relief on existing loans or quick access to cash as needed.

"This shutdown has placed many families into positions of hardship and we want to offer what support we can to impacted federal workers and contractors," said Bob Harrison, chairman and CEO of First Hawaiian Bank. "Whether it's access to funds or an existing loan payment deferral, we are here to offer the support to them in this time of need."

FHB offers several options that are customizable based on the customer's needs. Depending on the assistance program, it could include one or more of the following:

- $2,500 to $5,000 low-interest personal loan with option for payment deferral up to three months
- Up to three months existing loan payment deferral
- Up to three months waiver on credit card interest and fees
- Up to 3 months payment forbearance on existing mortgages

To learn more, stop by any FHB branch or call Customer Service Center at 1-888-844-4444. ***(PR)***

Lunar New Year party in the CNMI on Feb. 5

To mark the Lunar New Year, the Marianas Visitors Authority and community partners will hold an evening Lunar New Year Party on Feb. 5, 2019.

The evening will include live entertainment and food sales from 6pm to 10pm at Paseo de Marianas pedestrian mall in downtown Garapan.

Entertainment will include performances by the Chinese community, Korean community, the Chamorro community, and other groups.

"Lunar New Year is a high travel period for our visitors from Asia, and we want to make their holiday in the Marianas memorable and festive," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "We are pleased to join our tourism partners in bringing this celebration back this year."

The pedestrian mall will be decorated with traditional Korea and Chinese lamps. The event is co-organized by the Chinese Association, the Korean Community of Saipan, and the MVA.

For more information, contact the MVA Community Projects Division at communityprojects@mymarianas.com or call 664-3200/1. ***(MVA)***

AMP Visitor Center returns to daily operations

Thanks to a donation by its partner, Pacific Historic Parks, the visitor center and bookstore at the American Memorial Park will return to daily operations, but remain on the current schedule of 9:30am to 4pm.

At the same time, park roads, walking paths, memorials, and tennis courts at the AMP will remain accessible to visitors, but emergency services will be limited.

"We are pleased to be able to open the visitor center every day, although most of our other services are extremely limited," said AMP supt. Barbara Alberti. "I want to thank our island community for their patience, as we are unable to maintain our park sites to our usual standards.

"Most importantly, we thank everyone enjoying the beach, pavilion, tennis courts, and ballfields for taking their trash home with them after using the park. We hope everyone will show respect for our island and its beautiful environment. Remember, 'Pack It In, Pack It Out' means take home everything you bring in to the park and Leave no Trace!"

These adjusted dates and times are subject to change throughout the duration of the federal government shutdown. National Park Service social media and websites are not being monitored or updated and may not reflect current conditions.

Despite the shutdown of the federal government due to the lapse of appropriations, national parks will remain as accessible as possible while still following all applicable laws and procedures. For updates on the shutdown, visit www.doi.gov/shutdown. ***(NPS)***

NMC to host Cash for College workshops on three islands

Students who are looking for help in finding money to pay for college are encouraged to attend the upcoming Cash for College workshops hosted by Northern Marianas College.

Participants will be provided with personal, step-by-step assistance in completing college financial aid forms, focusing on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, CNMI Scholarship, Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance, Tinian Municipal Scholarship, Rota Municipal Scholarship, and the TEACH Grant.

Workshop participants can also have their financial aid documents notarized and photocopied, free of charge.

The Cash for College event will be held on Tinian, Rota, and Saipan on the following dates:

- Jan. 17: Tinian NMC campus, from 10am to 2pm
- Jan. 24 and 25: Rota NMC campus, from 10am to 4pm on Jan. 24 and from 8am to 12pm on Jan. 25
- Jan. 26: Saipan, Buildings N and O, NMC As Terlaje campus, from 9am to 12pm

File photo shows participants from last year's "Cash for College" workshop received one-to-one assistance in filling financial aid forms and received other services. The upcoming "Cash for College" workshop will be held on Tinian on Jan. 17, Rota on Jan. 24 and 25, and Saipan on Jan. 26.

Staff members from the college's Office of Admissions and Records will also be present to provide information and assistance with the NMC application process.

Those who participate in the workshop will qualify to have their NMC application fee and placement test fees waived for the upcoming spring 2019 semester—a savings of up to $75.

It is recommended that workshop participants bring a valid form of identification, an official transcript from high school (at least three copies), a copy of 2016 and 2017 1040, a copy of 2016 and 2017 W-2 (if not filing), and proof of CNMI residency, including proof of continuing residency. Applicants for SHEFA should bring a valid U.S. passport and a voters registration card.

For additional information, contact the NMC Financial Aid Office at 237-6792 or email daisy.propst@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

Guam Guard airmen begin departing for deployments

Airmen from the Guam Air National Guard's 254th Air Base Group and the 254th Security Forces Squadron have been departing over the past week en route to several deployment missions and locations in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in Southwest Asia.

The airmen of the 254ABG, specifically the Cyber Flight, are tasked to provide quality communication systems and services to its units worldwide. This includes equipping, administering, training and providing personnel to operate and maintain good ground communications, electronics and computer systems and facilities.

The members of the 254SFS are tasked with the protection of those that protect our nation. They are responsible for force protection and anti-terrorism duties to defeat security threats and tasked with the protection of Federal property from hazards such as sabotage, espionage, trespass, theft, fire, and accident or willful damage and destruction, in addition to maintaining law and order, preserve the peace, and protect life and civil rights within their assigned theater of operations in order to engineer combat power and establish and sustain combat platforms.

More airmen are scheduled to leave in the coming days and weeks as required. They will be deployed for approximately six months. ***(PR)***

2018 Inaugurations

JON PEREZ

Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez, center, blesses Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, second left, and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios in last Sunday's Red Mass at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral.

JON PEREZ

Former CNMI governor Benigno R. Fitial, seated right, and Palau President Tommy Remengesau, standing right, join family and friends for a photo after yesterday's inauguration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios.

KEVIN CALIBO

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, third left, takes his oath of office in yesterday's inauguration.

KEVIN CALIBO

House Speaker B.J. Attao (R-Saipan), center, presides over the organizational session of the House of Representatives in the 21st Legislature.

KEVIN CALIBO

Arnold I. Palacios, center, takes his oath of office as the 12th lieutenant governor of the CNMI.

JON PEREZ

From left, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and wife Wella, former Guam governor Felix P. Camacho and wife Joann, first lady Diann T. Torres, and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

KEVIN CALIBO

From left, U.S. District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy, CNMI Supreme Court Associate Justice John A. Manglona, NMI District Court Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, and Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja attend yesterday's organizational session of the House of Representatives in the 21st Legislature.

JON PEREZ

From left, CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro, Rev. Fr. Isidro T. Ogumoro, NMI District Court Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, and Associate Justice John A. Manglona attend the organizational session of the House of Representatives yesterday.

JON PEREZ

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, fifth left, and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios join their respective spouses and leaders of the CNMI's island neighbors after yesterday's inauguration.

KEVIN CALIBO

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, standing left, and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios arrive at the House chamber on Capital Hill for yesterday's House organizational session.

KEVIN CALIBO

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, third left, and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, second left, wave to crowd after their inauguration yesterday. They were joined by their wives Wella S. Palacios, left, and Diann T. Torres.

KEVIN CALIBO

The CNMI Senate holds its inaugural session.

KEVIN CALIBO

The CNMI Senate elects their new set of officials for the 21st Legislature led by Senate President Victor B. Hocog (R-Saipan).

KEVIN CALIBO

Members of the Senate offer a moment of silence at the beginning of their organizational session.

JON PEREZ

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, sixth left, and first lady Diann T. Torres, fourth left, with members of the 35th Guam Legislature led by Speaker Tina Muna-Barnes, fifth left.

KEVIN CALIBO

Members of the family of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres listen as he delivers his inaugural address.

Attorney General Edward E. Manibusan poses with the staff of the Office of the Attorney General during a swearing-in ceremony yesterday at the Pacific Islands Club's Annex Room. Manibusan took his oath of office for his second term as AG.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The Refaluwasch Warriors perform a cultural dance in the red carpet to start the inauguration ceremony for Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios yesterday at the Northern Mariana Islands Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The US needs more veterans in politics

Forty years ago, military veterans made up roughly three-quarters of Congress. By 2017, the proportion had dwindled to fewer than one in five. The number of veterans on Capitol Hill will dip slightly again next year, because of retirements—but the elections of 2018 were nonetheless a turning point of sorts. At least 170 veterans received major-party nominations for national office and at least 75 won office. (The figures are estimates: There's no official tally.) Of these, at least 18 are new to Congress—the most in nearly a decade.

Americans should care about this.

Until an age of peace and harmony dawns—little sign of this yet—Congress needs the perspective and experience of former service members, particularly those who've served in the post-9/11 era. A shared background in the armed forces might help check the excessive partisanship that hobbles America's system of government. And with polls showing Congress to be deeply unpopular, an influx of members from the institution Americans continue to respect the most certainly can't hurt.

So it's good news that increasing numbers of the 3.3 million veterans who joined up after the Sept. 11 attacks are opting to take on "second service" in politics. Good, too, that the tally of female veterans is going up. Also worth noting: More than one-third of the veterans elected were Democrats, and they played a key role in flipping the House.

Maybe the new influx can give veterans' issues a bit more of the attention they deserve. For instance, health records at the Department of Veterans Affairs need to be more quickly brought into the digital age—an era that has in fact arrived, though not everywhere. Improving insurance coverage for reproductive health care and reforming the veterans' disability system would be welcome too. While campaigning, many of the veterans promised to improve the services' methods for dealing with sexual assaults. That's overdue.

Beyond veterans' particular interests, former service members would carry extra weight in pushing for a new legal authorization for America's sprawling conflicts against terrorism. The existing 2001 measure is badly out of date.

Veterans in larger numbers can't fix what ails the country—but one expects that, as a group, they'll bring discipline, duty and a commitment to country before politics. Congress has been lacking in those traits lately.

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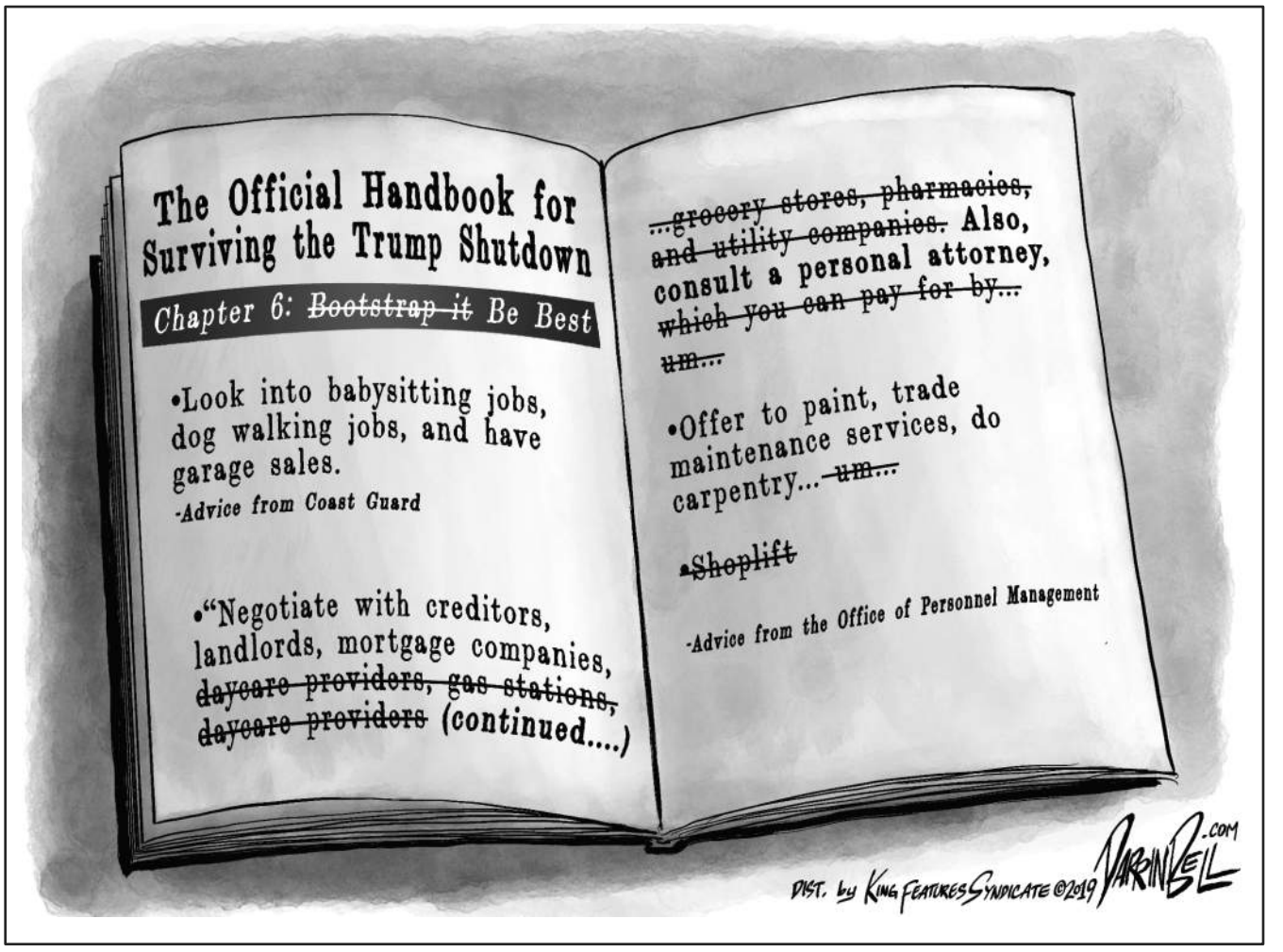
The Official Handbook for Surviving the Trump Shutdown
Chapter 6: ~~Bootstrap it~~ Be Best
•Look into babysitting jobs, dog walking jobs, and have garage sales.
-Advice from Coast Guard
•"Negotiate with creditors, landlords, mortgage companies, ~~daycare providers, gas stations, daycare providers~~ (continued....)
~~...grocery stores, pharmacies, and utility companies.~~ Also, consult a personal attorney, ~~which you can pay for by... um...~~
•Offer to paint, trade maintenance services, do carpentry... ~~um...~~
•~~Shoplift~~
-Advice from the Office of Personnel Management
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The ironies of illegal immigration

By VICTOR DAVIS HANSON
Tribune News Service

Victor Davis Hanson is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University and the author, most recently, of The Father of Us All: War and History, Ancient and Modern. *You can reach him by emailing author@victorhanson.com.*

Estimates suggest that there are 11 million to 13 million Mexican citizens currently living in the United States illegally. Millions more emigrated previously and are now U.S. citizens.

A recent poll revealed that one-third of Mexicans (34 percent) would like to emigrate to the United States. With Mexico having a population of about 130 million, that amounts to some 44 million would-be immigrants.

Such massive potential emigration into the United States makes no sense.

First, Mexico is a naturally rich country. It ranks 19th in the world in proven oil reserves and is currently the 12th-largest oil producer. Mexico certainly has significantly more natural advantages than do far wealthier per capita Singapore, Taiwan or Chile.

Mexico also is one of the world's most popular tourist destinations and earns billions in foreign exchange from visitors. It enjoys a temperate climate, is rich in minerals, and has millions of acres of fertile farmland and a long coastline.

In addition to being strategically located as a bridge between North America and South America, Mexico has ports on both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

It is not an overcrowded country: Mexico ranks in the lower half of the world in population density. Too many people and too little land are certainly not the reasons why millions of Mexicans either emigrate or wish to emigrate to the United States.

Second, popular progressive narratives in both Mexico and the United States cite America for all sorts of pathologies, past and present. The United States is often damned for prior colonialism and imperialism, as well as current racism and xenophobia.

Why, then, would millions of people south of the border leave their own homeland and potentially risk their lives to encounter a strange culture and language, to live in such a purportedly inhospitable place, and to adopt to an antithetical system based on supposedly toxic European and Protestant traditions?

The answers to these two paradoxes are as obvious as they are politically incorrect and therefore seldom voiced. Life in Mexico is relatively poor, dangerous and often unfree. In contrast, the United States is rich, generous and secure.

Mexico—unlike, say, Japan or Switzerland, which are far less naturally endowed and yet far wealthier—has never fully adopted Western paradigms of free-market economics, constitutionally protected free speech, due process, gender equity, private property rights, an autonomous press, government transparency, an independent judiciary, and religious diversity and tolerance.

To the degree that Mexico can make strides toward these goals, its population will stabilize and become more affluent—and also become less likely to emigrate.

More importantly, millions of Mexican citizens recognize (at least privately) that the United States is not the bogeyman of mostly elite critiques. Instead, it is one of the world's rare multiracial, equal-opportunity societies. It is generous with its entitlements even to those who cross its border illegally, and far more meritocratic than most of the world's highly tribal societies.

Maybe that is why millions of impoverished people from Mexico have left their homes in expectation that they will be treated far better as foreign, non-English speakers in a strange land than they will at home by their own government.

Indeed, if the U.S. treated immigrants in the fashion that Mexico does, then Mexican citizens would probably never emigrate to the U.S.

In sum, illegal immigration is both logical and nonsensical.

After all, the Mexican government is quick to fault the U.S., but it is rarely introspective. It does not explain publicly why its own citizens wish to flee the country where they were born—or why they are eager to enter a country that is so often ridiculed by the Mexican press and government.

Mexico apparently does not take care of its own citizens. But once they arrive inside the U.S., Mexico suddenly becomes an advocate for their welfare. No wonder: Mexican expatriates send back an estimated $30 billion a year in remittances.

Real and would-be emigrants themselves also act ironically.

On both sides of the border, they often fault the U.S. and demand that U.S. immigration law be suspended—but only in their case.

Emigrating Mexican citizens wave Mexican flags at the border as they try to enter America, while their counterparts inside the U.S. do the same when they protest being sent back home.

Apparently, no one in Mexico or in the U.S. ever wishes to admit that Mexican citizens really like the United States—apparently far more than they do their own homeland.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, village address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

We're paying less at the pump – and that's just the start

By NICOLAS LORIS
The Heritage Foundation

Nicolas Loris is the Herbert and Joyce Morgan Fellow in Energy and Environmental Policy, Center for Free Markets and Regulatory Reform at The Heritage Foundation (heritage.org).

Media outlets rarely dwell on positive trends, but it's been hard to miss the good news at the gasoline pump. As 2018 ended, gas prices fell to their lowest in nearly two years—below $2 a gallon in some states.

That was certainly helpful at Christmas time. Spending less on fuel means Americans had more money for their families during the holidays.

But the good news goes beyond what we spend fueling our cars and trucks. In many ways, 2018 was the story of America's continued energy dominance.

Throughout the year, American energy producers broke records and surpassed domestic supply levels that we haven't seen in many decades. Last September, the U.S. became the world's largest crude oil producer, surpassing Russia and Saudi Arabia.

According to the federal government's Energy Information Administration (EIA), crude oil production increased from about 9.5 million barrels per day in the beginning of 2018 to 11.7 million barrels per day by year's end. In December, EIA announced that the U.S. exported more oil and refined petroleum products than it imported – the first time in more than 35 years.

America's energy revolution is a remarkable story that demonstrates the rewards of human ingenuity and entrepreneurial passion. Those rewards trickle down to the driver through lower prices. While many factors influence the price at the pump, we cannot overlook the fact that domestic supply continues to roar ahead.

Oil isn't the only energy source that thrived in 2018. The U.S. continues to be the global leader in natural gas production, ranking number one for the past decade. According to a new report from EIA, "When final data become available in the coming months, EIA expects that U.S. natural gas production will have reached record levels in 2018." Increased supplies spell more affordable, dependable power for American households.

Abundant, low-cost power is also a win for energy-using businesses, especially America's energy-intensive manufacturing base. Natural gas is not only an important energy source, but also an important raw material for many manufacturing processes for fertilizers, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, food processing, industrial boilers and much more.

In fact, capital investment from the chemical and plastics industries topped $200 billion in 2018, an extraordinary number that's generated hundreds of thousands of direct and indirect jobs. When investment surpassed $200 billion (on 333 projects since 2010), American Chemistry Council president Cal Dooley remarked, "The U.S. remains the most attractive place in the world to invest in chemical manufacturing. We look forward to continuing to transform energy into a stronger economy and new jobs."

Domestic producers are shipping more liquefied natural gas (LNG) to our friends overseas, too. For the first time ever, LNG exports surpassed 5 billion cubic feet per day. We're now shipping LNG to 30 different countries across five continents. Furthermore, LNG exports would bolster U.S. national security and the security of America's allies by reducing the ability of any one nation to use its control of energy resources to threaten U.S. interests. LNG exports can be an integral source for Europeans pining for energy freedom.

Natural gas shipments to Mexico traveling via pipeline exceeded 5 billion cubic feet per day, too. With a new zero-tariff on energy trade deal and new pipeline construction in the works, our neighbors to the south are benefitting tremendously from the glut of U.S. energy abundance.

The success of American energy production in 2018 provides a lot of positive momentum for the New Year. With a new Congress, there are several broken policies to fix that take energy choice away from Americans.

We continue to pick winners and losers among energy technologies using the tax code. The federal government mandates that we blend corn ethanol into our fuel, and more than half the states in the Union have mandates that force a certain percentage of their electricity generation come from renewables. Quite simply, if these energy sources are cost-competitive, they won't need mandates.

In addition, advances in different small modular nuclear reactors continue to improve, though frustrating regulatory obstacles have proven a giant thorn in the side of nuclear innovation.

When policymakers fully empower producers and consumers by removing all of the government-imposed barriers to innovation, America's energy renaissance will be firing on all cylinders.

The lasting damage of shutdowns

By NAT KENDALL-TAYLOR
Los Angeles Times

Nat Kendall-Taylor is chief executive officer of the Frameworks Institute, a nonprofit organization that helps other nonprofits expand their use of social science research.

When the federal government shuts down, many problematic repercussions follow.

Food and medicine don't reach people in need, federal workers are caught in limbo without guaranteed pay for time lost, long-term damage is done to national parks, small businesses that cater to government employees experience significant losses and the government's ability to respond to international disasters is severely limited.

But there is another, more insidious effect of shutdowns: They hurt Americans' views of government, of the public good and even of the possibility of change. This damage persists well after government operations resume.

My colleagues and I study how Americans think about social issues. We do this by focusing on the cultural models that people use to make sense of issues—their implicit understandings, assumptions and patterns of reasoning.

We study these cultural models by talking with people. We ask open-ended questions about an issue: how it works, what should be done and who is responsible. We try to get people to explain, to narrate, to provide examples and to reason. All of this gives us a window into how they think.

We've done this for almost 20 years, examining more than 30 social issues with almost 400,000 research participants.

We've looked at issues that include addiction, aging, homelessness, healthcare, mental health and immigration.

When you have these conversations across diverse groups, you see common reasoning on a given topic. One particular line is strengthening across all groups: The idea that government is inefficient at best, and downright corrupt at worst.

Over and over, we find that most Americans view government as both monolithic and inept, even broken.

They see it as the government rather than our government. And they rarely recognize the many ways that it is woven into their daily lives.

To a majority of Americans, government is the problem, rather than an essential tool for solving problems.

This may seem unsurprising at this point. But the disturbing thing is that this view of government has become part of our collective cultural narrative, to the point where we simply take it for granted.

Americans apply this assumption to their thinking about children's education, poverty alleviation, climate change, gun violence and criminal justice reform.

In short, "government is broken" is more than a refrain. It's a widely held belief.

Our growing disdain for government is part of a larger, overarching outlook in American culture: a palpable sense of fatalism.

Many Americans display an implicit belief that the issues we face are too big, too deep and too numerous to be addressed, and that the body responsible for addressing them is too dysfunctional and ineffectual.

With increasing frequency and on a growing number of issues, Americans are simply throwing up their hands. As a result, they are also unwilling to spend any resource—psychological or financial—to move toward solutions.

In this context, a government shutdown serves as powerful proof of the views many Americans already hold and further evidence that change is impossible.

When this fatalistic outlook is underscored by such a powerful example, it becomes a serious hindrance to everyone working toward meaningful change. If our government can't run, what hope do we have of addressing any of the issues we face?

Although these patterns of thinking certainly didn't start with the current shutdown, or the previous one, or even the one before that, this view deepens with each closure.

To distrust and deride government has become part of what it means to be an American.

The question at this point is not how Americans think about government, but rather how to change the beliefs on which their understandings are predicated.

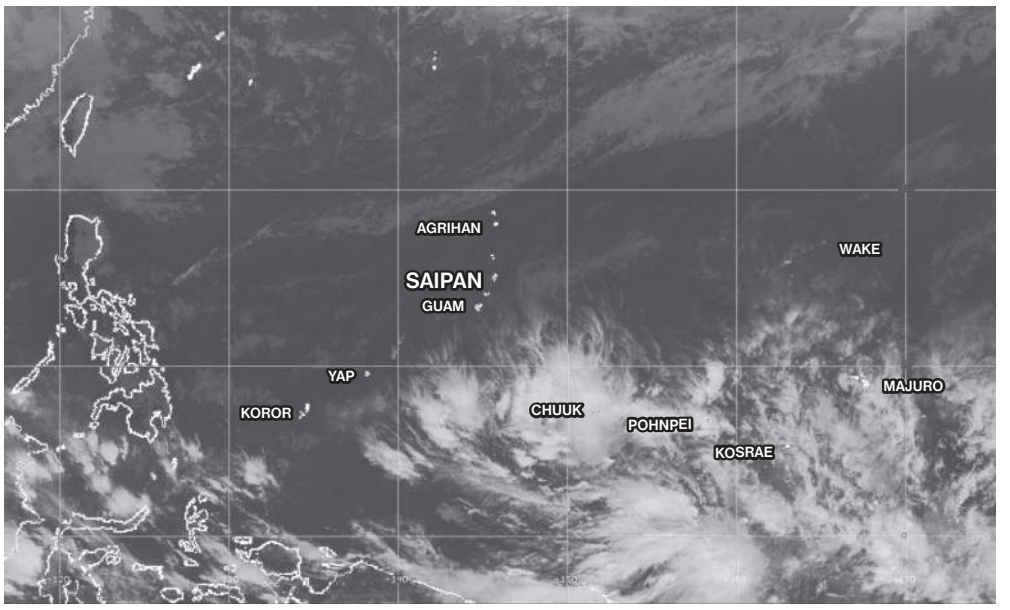
What will it take to embed a different narrative in the minds of Americans—one that recognizes the potential of government to support the well-being of its citizens? That's a story worth telling.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.
89° 77°	89° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	89° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:11 AM, MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The weather looks relatively quiet and dry through Wednesday. Then, the tropical disturbance that is the remnants of Tropical Depression 01W will pass well south of Guam. We will see an increase in clouds and potentially showers. The GFS keeps most of the showers south of Guam, however, the ECMWF brings more showers on the north side of the low Wednesday into Thursday. This was a big change from its previous solution, so would want to see model continuity before making any changes to the forecast. The next chance of any other showers could come early next week.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	85° / 78°
Palau	Showers	83° / 76°
Yap	Cloudy	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	75° / 64°
Beijing	Sunny	37° / 12°
Hong Kong	Showers	61° / 55°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	81° / 67°
London	Partly Cloudy	62° / 51°
Los Angeles	Rain	60° / 53°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86° / 72°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	86° / 70°
Miami	Sunny	73° / 56°
New York	Partly Cloudy	40° / 31°
Osaka	Cloudy	46° / 36°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	48° / 37°
Busan	Sunny	41° / 30°
Rome	Sunny	55° / 37°
Salem	Sunny	56° / 33°
San Francisco	Rain	55° / 52°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	30° / 23°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	52° / 34°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	41° / 25°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:01 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.30
7:36 AM	LOW TIDE	0.75
2:08 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.84
9:23 PM	LOW TIDE	0.41

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:06 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:39 AM	12:47 PM
Wednesday	-	1:30 AM	1:30 PM
Thursday	-	2:25 AM	2:16 PM
Friday	-	3:22 AM	3:08 PM
Saturday	-	4:23 AM	4:06 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U86486	10:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183 via GUM	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

China's 2018 trade surplus with US hits record high $323B

AP

In this Jan. 10, 2019, photo released by Xinhua News Agency, a worker checks on a soybean food at a processing factory in Xiaotun Township of Dafang County in Bijie, southwest China's Guizhou Province.

BEIJING (AP)—China's politically sensitive trade surplus with the United States surged to a record $323.3 billion in 2018 as a tariff battle with Washington intensified.

Chinese customs data released Monday showed December exports to the U.S. contracted 3.5 percent compared with a year earlier, however, as President Donald Trump's punitive tariffs hit in a fight over Chinese technology ambitions.

Exports to the United States held up through 2018 despite Trump's tariff increases as exporters rushed to fill orders. But forecasters say American orders are set to decline sharply.

For the year, exports rose 11.3 percent to $478.4 billion while imports of American goods rose just 0.7 percent over 2017, reflecting the impact of Beijing's retaliatory tariffs and encouragement to importers to buy more from other suppliers instead of the United States.

China's global exports rose 7.1 percent to $2.5 trillion in 2018, down from the 7.9 percent rate for 2017. Imports rose 12.9 percent to $2.1 trillion, down from the previous year's 15.9 percent.

The country's global trade surplus was $352 billion.

Trump has repeatedly expressed frustration with China's yawning trade gap with the United States, and the latest data might fuel demands by hardliners in Washington to punish Beijing.

Global weakness in demand for Chinese goods adds to pressure to resolve the tariff battle at a time when the ruling Communist Party also is trying to moderate an economic slowdown.

"The external environment is still complicated and severe," a customs agency spokesman, Li Kuiwen, said at a news conference.

Li cited potential dangers including rising "protectionism and unilateralism," a possible slowdown in global growth and a decline in cross-border investment.

Industry wary of alternatives tries to protect a word: meat

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP)—More than four months after Missouri became the first U.S. state to regulate the term "meat" on product labels, Nebraska's powerful farm groups are pushing for similar protection from veggie burgers, tofu dogs and other items that look and taste like real meat.

Nebraska lawmakers will consider a bill this year defining meat as "any edible portion of any livestock or poultry, carcass, or part thereof" and excluding "lab-grown or insect or plant-based food products." It would make it a crime to advertise or sell something "as meat that is not derived from poultry or livestock."

Similar measures aimed at meat alternatives are pending in Tennessee, Virginia and Wyoming. They come amid a debate over what to call products that are being developed using the emerging science of meat grown by culturing cells in a lab. Supporters of the science are embracing the term "clean meat"—language the conventional meat industry strongly opposes.

The issue strikes a particularly strong chord in Nebraska, one of the nation's top states for livestock production, where cars roll down the interstate with "Beef State" license plates and the governor each year proclaims May as "Beef Month."

Farm groups have found an unusual ally in state Sen. Carol Blood, a city-dwelling vegetarian from the Omaha suburb of Bellevue. Blood, who grew up on a farm, said she introduced the measure because agriculture is Nebraska's largest industry and needs to be protected for the good of the whole state.

"I'm not bringing this bill to tell people what they can and can't eat," she said. "All I'm asking for is truth in advertising. It's clear that meat comes from livestock, and livestock is our livelihood in Nebraska."

Nebraska led the nation in commercial red meat production in 2017 and had the most feed cows as of last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Livestock and livestock product sales generated an estimated $12.1 billion for the state's economy in 2016, according to the USDA's most recent available data.

The measure is certain to face resistance from food producers that sell plant-based alternatives, as well as those working to bring lab-grown meat to market. Critics say the bill infringes on the free-speech rights of companies that produce vegetarian alternatives to real meat.

Drinking problem affecting valued employee

Q: One of my employees has admitted to having a drinking problem. "Jerry" knows our business well and gets along with everyone, but he has a lot of absences. His excuses run the gamut, from coming down with the flu to having a sick pet. However, I suspect that he is either drinking or hung over.

While I would prefer not to replace Jerry, I will have to let him go if this pattern continues. Although he has acknowledged his difficulties with alcohol, he has apparently never sought any type of treatment. As Jerry's manager, can I do anything to encourage him to get help?

A: Jerry may indeed be an alcoholic, but you can't become his substance abuse counselor. Nor should you enable him by overlooking absences or accepting weak excuses. As his boss, however, you can definitely provide valuable assistance by highlighting his performance problems and pointing him in the direction of professional help.

If your company has an employee assistance program, talk with one of the counselors before meeting with Jerry. But if not, research treatment options until you identify a reputable and respected substance abuse program in your community.

During your discussion, explain how Jerry's frequent absences are jeopardizing his continued employment. You can deliver this message through your company's disciplinary policy, just as you would with any other poorly performing employee. Then, since he has voluntarily disclosed his drinking problem, you can suggest seeking help from a qualified professional.

For example: "Jerry, although you do good work when you're here, your frequent absences create problems for the business. That's why I'm giving you an official disciplinary warning. Because you have previously mentioned a drinking problem, I'm also giving you the number of a treatment program. However, making that contact is strictly up to you. Your continued employment will depend only on your job performance and attendance record. If nothing changes, I will have to take the next disciplinary step."

Explain that you value Jerry as an employee and want him to succeed, but emphasize that he is going to lose his job if the attendance problem is not corrected. Fear of being fired is sometimes the only thing that will get an alcoholic's attention.

Q: After I complained to "Megan" about some people in our department, she apparently went and told them exactly what I said. I have also learned that she lied to me about certain issues related to our work. I used to trust Megan and have even loaned her money, but now I feel betrayed. How should I confront her about this?

A: Instead of continuing this disruptive soap opera, you need to concentrate on avoiding similar problems in the future. Toward that end, here are a few simple guidelines.

Never talk badly about one coworker to another. Assume that anything you say is likely to be repeated. As a general rule, avoid lending money to people at work. Try to be pleasant and helpful to everyone, even those you don't particularly like.

But if these rules strike you as overly restrictive, you may have an unfortunate addiction to workplace drama.

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE

Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics." Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

Nation

With no new talks, LA teacher strike all but inevitable

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A massive teachers strike in Los Angeles, the nation's second-largest school district, is all but inevitable starting Monday after the two sides did not renew negotiations over the weekend.

Talks broke down Friday when the teachers' union rejected as "woefully inadequate" a new offer from the LA Unified School District.

With no new discussions scheduled, pickets are likely to begin at 7 a.m. as teachers stand firm on sticking points including higher pay and smaller class sizes.

Schools will stay open if a walkout happens. The district, with 640,000 students, has hired hundreds of substitutes to replace teachers and others who leave for picket lines.

The union has said it was "irresponsible" to hire subs and called on parents to consider keeping students home or join marchers if a strike goes forward.

The district's latest offer included adding nearly 1,200 teachers, counselors, nurses and librarians to schools, reducing class sizes by two students, and capping class sizes to between 32 and 39 students, depending on age and curriculum.

The offer also included the district's previously proposed 6 percent salary increase over the first two years of a three-year contract.

AP

Student Leo Rittner Solomon, 6, front left, and parent Hilda Rodriguez Guzman, right, react as United Teachers Los Angeles president and teacher Alex Caputo-Pearl announces the nation's second-largest school district will go on strike at a news conference in Los Angeles, Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019.

The union, United Teachers Los Angeles, wants a 6.5 percent hike that would take effect all at once and be retroactive to fiscal 2017. Union officials said some of the district's proposals would expire after a year, calling it disrespectful.

"We are at an impasse," union president Alex Caputo-Pearl said Friday.

District officials said it was imploring the union to reconsider, adding that it rejected the new offer without proposing a counteroffer.

"A strike will harm the students, families and communities we serve, and we have a responsibility to resolve the situation without a strike," the district tweeted.

A majority of UTLA's 35,000 members are expected to join the work stoppage.

Abram van der Fluit, a Los Angeles teacher opposed to the strike, said in a statement Sunday that colleagues who agree with him are "fearful" of speaking out against the union. He's a former UTLA member and currently part of the California Teachers Empowerment Network, which describes itself as a nonpartisan information source for teachers and the public.

"I don't support the rationale for the strike as articulated by UTLA," he said. "I don't believe that the reasons for the strike should be our priorities, as teachers."

Van der Fluit, a 20-year LAUSD veteran who teaches high school biology, said the union should prioritize other issues including creating access to vocational education classes and providing options for students who want to pursue careers that don't necessarily require a college degree.

Much of the acrimony between the district and the union centers around the new superintendent, Austin Beutner. The investment banker and former Los Angeles deputy mayor took the job last year without any experience in education.

GOP rejected Obama's executive reach, but accepts Trump's

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama stunned Republicans when he bypassed Congress and, relying on what he called his pen and his phone, used executive powers to enact his agenda, including protecting millions of young immigrants from deportation.

Now, with President Donald Trump proposing an even more dramatic end-run around Congress to build his promised border wall with Mexico, many Republicans are uneasily cheering him on.

The potential use of a national emergency declaration by Trump for the border wall shows the extent to which the party is willing to yield on treasured values — in this case, the constitutional separation of powers — to steer clear of confronting the White House and give the president what he wants.

It's a different accommodation from just a few years ago. Then Republicans often called out Obama as overstepping his authority in using executive actions when Congress failed to act on White House priorities. They complained about Obama as "king," ''emperor" or "tyrant."

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., a leader of the House Freedom Caucus, said most conservatives would go along with Trump's decision to declare a national emergency as "the last tool in the tool box" for building the wall.

"Does the president have the right and the ability to do it? Yes. Would most of us prefer a legislative option? Yes," Meadows told reporters this week. "Most conservatives want it to be the last resort he would use. But those same conservatives, I'm sure, if it's deployed, would embrace him as having done all he could do to negotiate with Democrats."

Other Republicans say Trump has few options left after talks broke down at the White House over his long-promised border wall.

"This is not something you would want to do," said Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia, now the top Republican on the Judiciary Committee.

"But we've been put into this position," he said. "The Democrats are forcing him into a choice of doing the national emergency because they won't sit down and discuss it."

On Saturday, the partial government shutdown will stretch in its 22nd day and Trump's plans for ending the stalemate are shifting yet again.

Trump indicated he was slowing what had appeared to be momentum toward the national emergency declaration as the way out of the stalemate. Invoking the power would allow him to tap unspent Defense funds to build the long-promised wall along the border that was central to his presidential campaign.

On the campaign trail, the president often said at rallies that Mexico would pay for the wall. But Mexico has refused forcing Trump to ask Congress for the money instead. Trump walked out of negotiations this week when Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Democrats refused to give, saying they support dollars for border security just not the big wall Trump envisions. They call the wall ineffective and say it's a symbol that does not reflect the nation's values.

After having talked for days about invoking the national emergency power to unleash the funds, the president hit pause Friday. "I'm not going to do it so fast," Trump said during an event Friday at the White House.

Experts have said even though the president may have the authority to invoke powers under the 1976 National Emergencies Act, using it will almost certainly bring on a court battle. The courts did not allow President Harry Truman to nationalize the U.S. steel industry during the Korean War.

Moreover, they say, it could lead the country into uncharted areas. Declaring an emergency could give the president access to many other powers, according to the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law.

"The president thinks that he can do whatever he wants by declaring something a national emergency," said Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii who serves on the Judiciary Committee. "I think it's a very dangerous thing."

Center where comatose woman had baby faced criminal probe

PHOENIX (AP) — Regulators wanted to remove developmentally disabled patients from a Phoenix long-term care facility years before a woman in a vegetative state gave birth, Arizona's largest newspaper reported Sunday.

The Arizona Republic reported Hacienda HealthCare faced a 2016 criminal investigation for allegedly billing the state more than $4 million for bogus 2014 charges for wages, transportation, housekeeping, maintenance and supplies.

The criminal case was dropped in 2017 and no charges were filed, the Republic said, but a court battle is continuing in an effort to force Hacienda to turn over financial records.

Phoenix police have said the 29-year-old woman incapacitated since age 3 was sexually assaulted and gave birth last month.

Investigators are collecting DNA from Hacienda's male employees and others who may have had contact with the woman in an effort to identify a suspect.

The woman's family has said in a statement through their attorney that they will care for the infant boy and have asked for privacy.

The revelation that a woman in a vegetative state was raped inside a care facility has horrified advocates for people with disabilities and the community at large.

Hacienda HealthCare's CEO William Timmons resigned on Dec. 31 as the provider announced new safety measures, including more than one staff member being present during patient interactions and more scrutiny of visitors.

Gov. Doug Ducey, a Republican, said his office is considering bringing in a third party to assume responsibility for the ongoing management of Hacienda.

The nonprofit facility gets more than $20 million annually in taxpayer funds for taking care of extremely ill people, many of whom are incapacitated and on ventilators, the Republic reported.

Hacienda's annual average cost of care was $386,000 per client in 2012 compared with $134,000 per client in similar U.S. facilities, Arizona Department of Economic Security auditors said.

The Republic said former economic security director Timothy Jeffries and the agency's chief law enforcement officer, Charles Loftus have both filed lawsuits against the state, claiming they were forced out of their jobs over their probe of Hacienda.

Asia

Indonesia finds Lion Air jet's cockpit voice recorder

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Navy divers have recovered the cockpit voice recorder of a Lion Air jet that crashed into the Java Sea in October, Indonesian officials said Monday, in a possible boost to the accident investigation.

Ridwan Djamaluddin, a deputy maritime minister, told reporters that remains of some of the 189 people who died in the crash were also discovered at the seabed location.

"We got confirmation this morning from the National Transportation Safety Committee's chairman," he said.

A spokesman for the Indonesian navy's western fleet, Lt. Col. Agung Nugroho, said divers using high-tech "ping locator" equipment had started a new search effort on Friday and found the voice recorder beneath 8 meters (26 feet) of seabed mud. The plane crashed in waters 30 meters (98 feet) deep.

The device is being transported to a navy port in north Jakarta, Nugroho said, and will be handed over to the transportation safety committee, which is overseeing the accident investigation.

AP
A box containing the flight data recorder from ther crashed Lion Air jet is lifted aboard a rescue ship.

The 2-month-old Boeing 737 MAX 8 jet plunged into the Java Sea just minutes after taking off from Jakarta on Oct. 29, killing everyone on board.

The cockpit data recorder was recovered within days of the crash and showed that the jet's airspeed indicator had malfunctioned on its last four flights.

If the voice recorder is undamaged, it could provide valuable additional information to investigators.

The Lion Air crash was the worst airline disaster in Indonesia since 1997, when 234 people died on a Garuda flight near Medan. In December 2014, an AirAsia flight from Surabaya to Singapore plunged into the sea, killing all 162 on board.

Lion Air is one of Indonesia's youngest airlines but has grown rapidly, flying to dozens of domestic and international destinations. It has been expanding aggressively in Southeast Asia, a fast-growing region of more than 600 million people.

Ghosn's wife slams Japan detention as 'draconian' in letter

TOKYO (AP)—The wife of Nissan's former chairman Carlos Ghosn has written a letter to Human Rights Watch, a global advocacy group, criticizing her husband's long detention and Japan's criminal justice system as unfair and harsh.

"My husband's is a case study in the realities of this draconian system," Carole Ghosn wrote in a nine-page letter Monday to the Tokyo branch of the organization.

Carlos Ghosn was arrested Nov. 19 and has been charged with falsifying financial reporting in underreporting his income and with breach of trust in having Nissan Motor Co. shoulder his personal investment losses and make payments to a Saudi businessman.

Ghosn, who led Nissan for two decades and rescued the Japanese automaker from near-bankruptcy, asserted his innocence in a Tokyo court last week. It was his first public appearance since his arrest.

Carole Ghosn's letter describes how prosecutors interrogate prisoners without a lawyer present in an apparent effort to get a confession — conditions that are routine for suspects in Japan. Japan's system has come under fire from international human rights groups, as her letter notes.

AP
This courtroom sketch depicts former Nissan chairman Carlos Ghosn in a courtroom at the Tokyo District Court in Tokyo Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019.

Confined to an unheated cell, her husband has lost almost 7 pounds (3 kilograms) in two weeks, with meals of mainly rice and barley, she wrote. He is denied his medication, given 30 minutes to exercise daily and is allowed to bathe two or three times a week, she said.

"No human being should be detained under conditions so harsh that their only plausible purpose is to coerce a confession," said the letter, which cited cases in which people were later found innocent but had been detained for months.

Tokyo Deputy Chief Prosecutor Shin Kukimoto told reporters last week that prosecutors are confident they have a case. Ghosn's lawyers have complained about the prolonged detention but their appeals have been rejected. Prosecutors say Ghosn is a flight risk and he may tamper with evidence. No trial date has been set.

Carole Ghosn's letter defended her husband's character and his record in the auto industry.

"My husband is well known as a person of unimpeachable honor, honesty and integrity," she said in her letter.

ASIAN BRIEFS

16 injured in Kashmir protests after 2 rebels killed

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Massive anti-India protests and clashes erupted in disputed Kashmir on Sunday, leading to injuries to at least 16 people after a gunbattle between militants and government forces overnight killed two rebels, police and residents said. The clashes erupted after government forces in the southern Shopian area tried to stop mourners from attending the funeral of one of India's most wanted rebels in the Himalayan region, police said. Rebel commander Zeenatul Islam was killed along with his associate late Saturday in a gunbattle with Indian troops. Government forces fired bullets, shotgun pellets and tear gas to stop the mourners, leading to street clashes as groups of youths pelted stones at the troops, police and residents said. Later, authorities withdrew security deployments amid massive anti-India protests and clashes at several places in the area. At least 16 people were injured in the clashes. India and Pakistan each claim the divided territory of Kashmir in its entirety. Rebels have been fighting Indian control since 1989. Most Kashmiris support the rebel cause that the territory be united either under Pakistani rule or as an independent country while also participating in civilian street protests against Indian control. Nearly 70,000 people have been killed in the uprising and the ensuing Indian crackdown.

Coal mine collapses in northern China, killing at least 21

BEIJING (AP)—Twenty-one coal miners were killed when a mine collapsed in northern China, state media reported Sunday. The disaster occurred Saturday in Shenmu in Shaanxi province in the heart of the country's coal-mining belt, according to state TV and the Xinhua News Agency. Sixty-six other miners were rescued, the city government said in a statement. The number of fatalities reported in cave-ins, explosions and other disasters in Chinese coal mines has fallen sharply over the past decade, but the industry still is the world's deadliest.

Afghan official: Gas cylinder blast leaves 9 dead in Kabul

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An Afghan official says at least nine people were killed when a gas cylinder exploded in Kabul. Wahidullah Mayar, spokesman for the Public Health Ministry, says several people were also injured in the late Saturday explosion inside a residential house in the Afghan capital. Such incidents are common in Afghanistan, especially during the bitterly cold winters. Last week, a fire that began at a gas station in Kabul, spread overnight to a nearby apartment complex, killing three people and causing much damage. Authorities said 42 suffered burns and other injuries. A gas-filled tanker parked at the station caught fire, causing the blaze to spread quickly. A police investigation is still under way into that incident.

World

Pompeo: Qatar diplomatic crisis 'has dragged on too long'

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Sunday an ongoing boycott of Qatar by four of America's allies in the Middle East "has dragged on too long," though he gave no sign of any coming breakthrough in the dispute.

Stopping off in the small, energy-rich nation as part of a Mideast tour, America's top diplomat made a repeated point to say that "great things" were happening between Qatar and the United States.

"We're all more powerful when we're working together," Pompeo said at a news conference. "Disputes between countries that have a shared objective are never helpful."

Pompeo said he signed a memorandum of understanding with Qatar regarding the expansion and renovation of al-Udeid Air Base, which hosts the forward headquarters of the U.S. military's Central Command and some 10,000 American troops.

However, comments by Pompeo and Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani gave no sense of any movement in the ongoing diplomatic crisis with Doha.

Later, speaking to a U.S. Embassy staff member in Qatar who said her job was moving to the UAE due to the boycott's effects, Pompeo was even more frank.

"It's on everyone's mind and not at all clear that the rift is any closer to being resolved today than it was yesterday—and I regret that," Pompeo said.

Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates began a boycott of Qatar in June 2017, alleging Qatar funds extremist groups and has too-cozy ties to Iran. Qatar has long denied funding extremists, but Doha shares a massive offshore natural gas field with Tehran that gives its citizens the highest per-capita income in the world. It restored diplomatic relations with Iran after the crisis erupted, marking a setback for Saudi Arabia, which views the Shiite power Iran as its main regional rival.

A similar dispute involving Qatar erupted in 2014. But this time positions have hardened against Qatar, whose support for Islamist opposition groups has angered the Arab nations now boycotting it.

Earlier this month, Gen. Anthony Zinni, a former commander of U.S. Central Command who retired from the Marine Corps in 2000, resigned as special American envoy to resolve the dispute. Regional analysts suggested it may be in part to intransigence of those involved in the crisis.

"The departure of Mr. Zinni in no way reflects any change in America's Middle East efforts, our strategy or our ongoing commitment to the region," Pompeo said. "It was a time for change. He made this decision to move on, but America's commitment remains unchanged."

From Qatar, Pompeo travels to Saudi Arabia on his Mideast tour. The relationship between Riyadh and Washington remains tense following the October assassination of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. Members of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's entourage have been implicated in the killing and U.S. lawmakers have demanded America pull back its support of the Saudi-led war in Yemen.

AP

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, left, is greeted by Saudi's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir, center, in Riyadh on Sunday, January 13, 2019, during his Middle East tour.

Nuclear chief says Iran exploring new uranium enrichment

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—The head of Iran's nuclear program said Sunday that the Islamic Republic has begun "preliminary activities for designing" a modern process for 20-percent uranium enrichment for its 50-year-old research reactor in Tehran, signaling new danger for the nuclear deal.

Restarting enrichment at that level would mean Iran had withdrawn the 2015 nuclear deal it struck with world powers, an accord that President Donald Trump already pulled America out of in May.

However, Ali Akbar Salehi's comments to state television appeared aimed at telling the world Iran would slowly restart its program. If it chooses, it could resume mass enrichment at its main facility in the central Iranian town of Natanz.

"Preliminary activities for designing modern 20 percent (enriched uranium) fuel have begun," state TV quoted Salehi as saying.

Salehi said adding the "modern fuel" will increase efficiency in Tehran research reactor that consumes 20-percent enriched fuel.

"We are at the verge" of being ready, he said, without elaborating.

In June, Iran informed the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog that it will increase its nuclear enrichment capacity within the limits set by the 2015 agreement with world powers. Iran continues to comply with the terms of the deal, according to the U.N., despite the American pullout.

Salehi heads the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, whose Tehran campus holds the nuclear research reactor given to the country by the U.S. in 1967 under the rule of the shah. But in the time since that American "Atoms for Peace" donation, Iran was convulsed by its 1979 Islamic Revolution and the subsequent takeover and hostage crisis at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

For decades since, Western nations have been concerned about Iran's nuclear program, accusing Tehran of seeking atomic weapons. Iran long has said its program is for peaceful purposes, but it faced years of crippling sanctions.

The 2015 nuclear deal Iran struck with world powers, including the U.S. under President Barack Obama, was aimed at relieving those fears. Under it, Iran agreed to store its excess centrifuges at its underground Natanz enrichment facility under constant surveillance by the U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran can use 5,060 older-model IR-1 centrifuges at Natanz, but only to enrich uranium up to 3.67 percent.

That low-level enrichment means the uranium can be used to fuel a civilian reactor but is far below the 90 percent needed to produce a weapon. Iran also can possess no more than 300 kilograms (660 pounds) of that uranium. That's compared to the 10,000 kilograms (22,046 pounds) of higher-enriched uranium it once had.

Trump, who campaigned on a promise to tear up the nuclear deal, said he ultimately pulled America out of the accord over Iran's ballistic missile program and its malign influence on the wider Mideast.

WORLD BRIEFS

Austria avalanche kills 3; ski patrollers killed in France

BERLIN (AP)—Three German skiers have been killed in an avalanche in Austria and a fourth is still missing, police said Sunday as snowfall set in again in the northern Alps. In France, two ski patrollers were killed when the devices they use to trigger avalanches exploded. The two accidents brought to at least 26 the number of weather-related deaths reported in parts of Europe this month. In Austria, the wife of one of the German skiers reported them missing on Saturday. The bodies of the men, aged 57, 36 and 32, were recovered later Saturday evening near the ski resort of Lech. Police in Vorarlberg, Austria's westernmost province, said they had to call off the search for another missing German skier in the group, age 28, because of heavy snow and the risk of avalanches. Police said the four friends had apparently skied onto a trail that was closed. Although they had avalanche protection equipment and deployed airbags, the victims were buried by the avalanche and suffered multiple injuries. They were located with the help of cellphone tracking.

Body found in rubble brings toll to 4 in Paris bakery blast

PARIS (AP)—Paris Fire Department said rescuers have found a woman's body under the rubble of a bakery in Paris that was blown apart by a powerful explosion, bringing the overall death toll to four. The blast Saturday morning in the Rue de Trevise in north-central Paris also injured dozens of people. Paris Fire Department spokesman Eric Moulin told reporters Sunday that 9 people were still in critical condition from the explosion that devastated a Paris street and 45 others also injured but not as seriously. He had said earlier that French rescuers were searching for a missing woman living in the building where the bakery was located. Paris prosecutor Remy Heitz said Saturday the cause of the blast appeared to be accidental. He said Paris firefighters were already on the scene to investigate a suspected gas leak at the bakery when the explosion happened. Two firefighters were among those killed. About 30 firefighters were at the site Sunday to search for other potential victims, amid a mountain of debris and wrecked cars.

Iraq says it supports Syria's return to Arab League

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohamed Alhakim says his country supports efforts to restore Syria's membership in the Arab League eight years after it was expelled from the regional body. Iraq is one of three countries in the Arab world that never cut ties with Syrian President Bashar Assad's government after its crackdown against anti-government demonstrations in 2011 led to civil war. Syria was cast out of the Arab League the same year. Alhakim received Iranian Foreign Minister Jawad Zarif in Baghdad on Sunday. Iran remained a steadfast backer of Assad throghout Syria's conflict. The two ministers discussed Syria and other regional issues, Alhakim said at a press conference after their meeting. They also discussed economic ties between their two countries in light of recent U.S. sanctions against Iran.

Focus

Fresh-faced Venezuelan lawmaker emerges as Maduro's rival

By FABIOLA SANCHEZ and SCOTT SMITH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP
Juan Guaido, president of National Assembly, shows marks on his wrists which he says are from handcuffs, to supporters at a rally in Caraballeda, Venezuela, Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019, as his wife Fabiana Rosales stands next to him. The new head of Venezuela's increasingly defiant congress was pulled from his vehicle and briefly detained by police Sunday, a day after the U.S. backed him assuming the presidency as a way out of the country's deepening crisis.

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—When Venezuelans rang in the new year, few in the crisis-wracked nation had even heard of Juan Guaido.

Two weeks later, the young backbench lawmaker has emerged as a key power broker as he leads the opposition-controlled congress in a high-stakes standoff with socialist President Nicolas Maduro, who is increasingly seen as a dictator both at home and abroad.

"Guaido for president!" people shouted Friday at the largest street rally in over a year to take on Maduro, eagerly waiting for the fresh-faced 35-year-old to speak. "Out with Maduro!"

As Venezuela's economic crisis deepens, with masses fleeing the country to escape runaway inflation on pace to surpass 23 million percent, many are desperate for a new leader to rescue the once-wealthy oil nation from two decades of socialist rule.

Dozens of countries, including the United States, denounced Maduro as illegitimate as he took the oath Thursday for a second, six-year term.

Into that void stepped Guaido.

An industrial engineer who cut his political teeth in a student protest movement a decade ago, he was elected to the National Assembly in 2015, and in its first session this year was named its leader.

Maduro in a Friday night TV address from the presidential palace made light of Guaido's newcomer status, feigning confusion over whether his name was "Guaido" or "Guaire," a notoriously polluted river that runs through Caracas.

"A lot of people in Venezuela are going to ask what is this 'Guaido'?" Maduro joked.

However, the perils of tangling with Maduro are no laughing matter. Shortly after he was elected head of the National Assembly, the rival constitutional assembly controlled by Maduro's allies threatened Guaido and others with an investigation for treason.

That's the same charge that landed in jail another up-and-coming opponent, Juan Requenses, following a drone attack on Maduro in August. Requenses has yet to have a public hearing, nor have prosecutors presented any evidence in the case.

Venezuela's feared SEBIN intelligence police pulled Guaido from his vehicle Sunday as he headed to a town hall meeting and briefly detained him.

The challenge for Guaido is to find a way to avoid being permanently arrested while keeping together a fractious opposition coalition, some of whose leaders are urging him to invoke an article of the constitution to declare himself interim president in direct defiance of the "illegitimate" Maduro.

Luis Vicente Leon, head of the Caracas-based polling firm Datanalisis, said such a radical approach is popular among the restive grassroots, exiles and their conservative foreign backers. But it won't necessarily loosen Maduro's powerful grip on Venezuela's institutions, oil wealth and especially the military—the traditional arbiter of political disputes.

"If he decides to do it, part of the opposition will say he's crazy, and if he doesn't, part will say he's a coward," Leon said. "Meanwhile, Maduro is waiting on the side to take advantage of the situation."

The architect of Guaido's meteoric rise is Leopoldo Lopez, Venezuela's most popular opposition leader, who is muzzled under house arrest and considered by government opponents to be a political prisoner.

At a time when many had written off the National Assembly, which was stripped of its last bit of power after the government set up the rival constitutional assembly in 2017, Lopez maneuvered behind the scenes for his Popular Will party to assume the presidency of the gutted legislature.

He then tapped Guaido, serving his first full term as a lawmaker, who rose to the helm of their party in Venezuela after eight more senior politicians sitting on Popular Will's national board were exiled since 2014.

Guaido has been a loyal acolyte of Lopez for years, standing beside him at a 2014 news conference when the activist announced a strategy of anti-Maduro unrest. What was called "The Exit" bitterly divided the opposition because it came less than a year into Maduro's presidency, when support for his rule was still strong.

The two talk a half dozen times each day, and not a single speech or move isn't coordinated with Lopez first, said one ally, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the internal proceedings.

Because Guaido was unknown, Leon said that he hadn't even measured Guaido's approval ratings, like he does numerous other politicians. But he plans to start doing so this week.

Critics say Guaido lacks a political vision, pointing to his rambling debut speech as the legislature's president, which was full of rhetorical barbs aimed at the "usurper" Maduro but short on specifics on how to get out of the malaise.

Still, others see his youth and relative inexperience as breathing life into the beaten-down opposition, making Maduro's frequent diatribes that it is dominated by elitist relics from Venezuela's pre-revolutionary past harder to stick.

Guaido told The Associated Press in a recent interview he doesn't fear running into the same fate as his political allies. He pointed to scars on his neck caused by rubber bullets fired during 2017 street demonstrations against Maduro.

"I still have projectiles lodged here," he said.

Guaido has endured hardships for much of his life. At age 15, shortly after Maduro's mentor, the late Hugo Chavez, assumed the presidency and ushered in a socialist overhaul, Guaido and his family survived a torrential mudslide that killed thousands and left many more homeless in the port city of La Guaira, a short distance from Caracas and home to the capital's airport.

"We are survivors," he said. "If they take Juan Guaido prisoner, someone else will emerge, because our generation won't give up."

Like Lopez, the wiry Guaido prides himself an athlete and is a devotee of his hometown's Sharks—a perennial loser in the Venezuelan baseball league. He and his wife, a fellow activist, have a daughter named for Francisco Miranda, a precursor to Venezuelan independence hero Simon Bolivar.

While in congress, Guaido earned a reputation as a hard worker and consensus-builder while serving as the head of the comptroller commission that investigates allegations of government corruption.

Now he is drawing attention on the international stage. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the presidents of Colombia and Chile have each called him in recent days to offer support.

Luis Almagro, the head of the Organization of American States, went even further, recognizing him as Venezuela's interim president—a title Guaido himself has been careful to avoid embracing. "You have our support," Almagro tweeted.

And on Saturday, the U.S. State Department issued a statement explicitly calling for a new government in Venezuela.

But for the frontal assault on Maduro's authority to succeed, Venezuelans fearful of taking to the streets again after past uprisings ended in violent crackdowns and bitter divisions must be prepared to risk it all again.

To that end, Guaido urged during Friday's rally for Venezuelans to join him in a nationwide demonstration on the historically fraught date of Jan. 23—the anniversary of a 1958 popular uprising that overthrew military dictator Marcos Perez Jimenez.

"The constitution gives me the legitimacy to carry out the charge of the presidency over the country to call elections," Guaido said. "But I need backing from the citizens to make it a reality."

Overdrive

2020 Ford Explorer uses luxury-vehicle engineering to offer performance

TNS
The 2020 Ford Explorer.

By MARK PHELAN
DETROIT FREE PRESS

DETROIT—Ford threw away the rulebook when it developed the new 2020 Explorer SUV, using engineering that's more frequently seen on luxury and high-performance SUVs than family-carrying three-row vehicles.

The new Explorer's architecture has more in common with sporty SUVs and off-roaders like the Range Rover Sport and Jeep Grand Cherokee than with its predecessor and competitors such as the Chevrolet Traverse and Toyota Highlander.

The Explorer seats six or seven, depending on whether the middle row of seats has a bench or two captain's chairs. Ford claims easy rear-seat access with one-touch operation for the middle seats.

Many more features

The base model will cost $32,765, $400 more than the 2019 model, despite adding standard features including automatic emergency braking, pedestrian detection, blind-spot alert, power tailgate, LED head and taillights, post-crash braking to keep the vehicle from ricocheting into secondary impacts, and steering that subtly compensates to keep the vehicle going straight in crosswinds.

The 2020 Explorer goes on sale this summer, and fuel economy figures will be announced later in the year.

The Explorer will be able to tow up to 5,600 pounds, 600 more than a Traverse or Highlander.

Ford also plans to offer a fuel-saving hybrid model and a sporty Explorer ST with more power and other performance upgrades. Details on those models will be announced Monday at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

The Explorer is based on a rear-wheel-drive architecture — family haulers including the Highlander, Traverse and Pilot have front-wheel-drive base models. Ford expects most sales to have four-wheel drive.

The Explorer shares its architecture with the Lincoln Aviator luxury SUV that goes on sale later this year. Ford builds both vehicles in Chicago.

Quicker, more fuel efficient

The switch to a rear-drive based chassis is a radical move. Ford expects it to pay off with better handling, a more even weight distribution, sporty proportions and more.

Ford knows handling and acceleration are low priorities for most buyers of three-row SUVs, but believes an advantage in those areas could be a crucial edge as the market for SUVs gets more crowded.

Rear-drive vehicles have a reputation for better performance but smaller interiors and worse fuel economy than front-drive based vehicles, but chief engineer Bill Gubing says the 2020 Explorer has more passenger and cargo space and better off-road capability.

Ford said the new model is about 200 pounds lighter and will get better fuel economy than the 2019 Explorer.

The Explorer's 4wd system has nine driving modes, with settings for everything from sporty driving to trailering; deep snow and sand; and off-road trails.

Ford will use those features and capabilities to pitch the Explorer as a gateway to family adventures.

Key features on the 2020 Explorer:

- Base 300-horsepower, 2.3-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine
- Optional twin-turbo 3.0L V6 with 365 hp and 380 pound-feet of torque
- 10-speed automatic transmission
- Improved off-road capability
- Fuel-saving hybrid model
- ST model with performance and styling tweaks
- Optional 10.1-inch tablet-style touch pad
- Rotary shifter
- Power-folding rear seats
- Automatic steering, braking and power application during parallel and perpendicular parking. All the driver has to do is press a button while the SUV parks itself.
- Room to lay a 4-by-8-foot sheet of plywood flat in the rear
- Acoustic glass and noise cancellation for a quiet interior
- Massaging, heated and cooled front seats
- 980-watt, 14-speaker B&O audio

Mark Phelan is the Detroit Free Press *auto critic. He can be reached at mmphelan@freepress.com.*

Mystery of a low brake pedal

Q: I just had my tires rotated at a tire store. When I got the car back the brake pedal felt lower than it should. I took it back and they checked it out and said there was nothing wrong and rotating the tires couldn't have caused this. I'm still convinced there's something wrong, and a friend said I should "bleed the brakes." Does this sound right? What do you think is wrong? It's a 2011 Acura TSX.

— A.P.

A: This is quite odd, as a low brake pedal doesn't seem like something that would have resulted due to a simple tire rotation. Let's look at some possible causes for a low brake pedal.

Your TSX employs disc brakes front and rear, so this rules out a brake adjustment problem. Older drum brake equipped vehicles sometimes suffered from a low pedal due the wheel cylinders needing to push further in compensation for greater brake shoe/drum clearance.

This steers us towards a possible hydraulic system problem. A leaking caliper or brake hose would result in fluid loss, possibly noticeable at the back of the wheel/tire, and low/depleted fluid in the master cylinder fluid reservoir. Symptoms would include a low/mushy brake pedal and more than likely an illuminated red brake warning indicator. This is a very serious condition requiring immediate repair!

Air can be accidentally introduced to the hydraulic system if the master cylinder reservoir fluid level becomes low/depleted due to neglect and/or very thin brake pads requiring extended caliper piston position. Since air is compressible, one would notice a spongy/low brake pedal that may improve somewhat if the pedal is repeatedly pumped. This is where the brake bleeding process would be employed, as the air is gradually drawn out of the system as new fluid is drawn in.

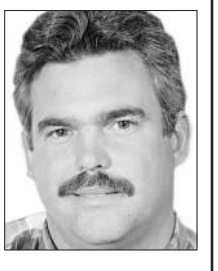
Brake pad knock-back, a rare circumstance, caused by large rotor thickness variations, can also lead to a soft/low pedal as the caliper pistons need to push out more than usual during each initial brake application. Upon a second pedal push, the pedal would be higher. It's unlikely this is occurring, as you didn't mention brake pedal pulsation or a shuddering effect when braking.

You might try this: With the engine not running, press down firmly on the brake pedal. It should be much firmer and higher than when the power brake system is active. Note the pedal height and firmness. If sponginess is felt, either there's air in the system or a brake hose is swelling, similar in effect and seriousness to an aneurysm in an artery. Try also pressing firmly for perhaps a full minute. If the pedal starts firm but gradually sinks it's likely due to a leaking master cylinder seal. This type of leak is internal, so fluid loss won't be noticed. Both situations scream immediate service is needed!

If you should find the master cylinder reservoir fluid level to be acceptable and the above pedal height/firmness checks appear good, I'm not sure what to suggest next other than to trust your judgment and seek a second opinion for a brake system inspection.

UNDER THE HOOD

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
Tribune News Service



Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at bradbergholdt@gmail.com; he cannot make personal replies.

Life & Style

‘Roma’ tops Critics’ Choice Awards; a tie for Gaga and Close

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—”Roma” is the top winner at the Critics’ Choice Awards, winning best picture, foreign language film and a pair of individual honors for director Alfonso Cuaron.

The 24th annual ceremony held Sunday at Barker Hanger in Santa Monica, California, also split the top actress award between Glenn Close for “The Wife” and Lady Gaga for “A Star Is Born.” The split win comes a week after Close won the Golden Globe Award for best actress in a film drama, an award that many expected Lady Gaga would win.

“The Americans” and “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel” tied for top television winners with three apiece. “Maisel” won the top comedy honor for the second year in a row, and series star Rachel Brosnahan also was a repeat winner for best actress in a comedy series.

“Black Panther” and “Vice” each won three awards, including a pair of acting honors for Christian Bale for his portrayal of former Vice President Dick Cheney.

The best actress prize wasn’t the only award that resulted in a tie: Amy Adams and Patricia Arquette split the best actress in a limited series or movie made for television honor.

Elsie Fisher won the best new actress honor for her breakthrough role in “Eighth Grade.”

The show was broadcast live on the CW network and hosted by Taye Diggs.

Glenn Close, left, and Lady Gaga, winners in a tie for the best actress award, hug in the press room at the 24th annual Critics’ Choice Awards on Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019, at the Barker Hangar in Santa Monica, Calif. AP

WINNERS’ LIST

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) — Winners of the 2019 Critics’ Choice Awards, presented Thursday at the Barker Hangar in Santa Monica, California:

Film: “Roma”
Actor: Christian Bale, “Vice”
Actress: TIE, Glenn Close, “The Wife” and Lady Gaga, “A Star Is Born”
Supporting actor: Mahershala Ali, “Green Book”
Supporting actress: Regina King, “If Beale Street Could Talk”
Young actor:/actress: Elsie Fisher, “Eighth Grade”
Acting ensemble: “The Favourite”
Director: Alfonso Cuaron, “Roma”
Original screenplay: Paul Schrader, “First Reformed”
Adapted screenplay: Barry Jenkins, “If Beale Street Could Talk”
Cinematography: Alfonso Cuaron, “Roma”
Production design: “Black Panther”
Editing: “First Man”
Costume design: “Black Panther”
Hair and makeup: “Vice”
Visual effects: “Black Panther”
Animated feature: “Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse”
Action movie: “Mission Impossible: Fallout”
Comedy: “Crazy Rich Asians”
Actor, comedy: Christian Bale, “Vice”
Actress, comedy: Olivia Colman, “The Favourite”
Sci-fi or horror: “A Quiet Place”
Foreign language: “Roma”
Song: “Shallow,” “A Star Is Born”
Score: “First Man,” Justin Hurwitz
Drama series: “The Americans”
Actor, drama series: Matthew Rhys, “The Americans”
Actress, drama series: Sandra Oh, “Killing Eve”
Supporting actor, drama series: Noah Emmerich, “The Americans”
Supporting actress, drama series: Thandie Newton, “Westworld”
Comedy series: “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”
Actor, comedy series: Bill Hader, “Barry”
Actress, comedy series: Rachel Brosnahan, “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”
Supporting actor, comedy series: Henry Winkler, “Barry”
Supporting actress, comedy series: Alex Borstein, “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”
Limited series: “The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story”
TV movie: “Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert”
Actor in a TV movie or limited series: Darren Criss, “The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story”
Actress in a TV movie or limited series: TIE: Amy Adams, “Sharp Objects” and Patricia Arquette, “Escape at Dannemora”
Supporting actor in a TV movie or limited series: Ben Whishaw, “A Very English Scandal”
Supporting actress in a TV movie or limited series: Patricia Clarkson, “Sharp Objects”
Animated series: “BoJack Horseman”

Bulgaria’s oldest city honored as European culture capital

SOFIA, Bulgaria (AP)—Plovdiv, the oldest city in Bulgaria, has been officially inaugurated as the European Capital of Culture for 2019.

Some 50,000 people gathered on a main square Saturday to watch the opening show dubbed “We are all colors” with 1,500 local and foreign artists on several stages. The entertainment included traditional Bulgarian folk dancers, 200 choir singers, a brass orchestra and a musical and laser spectacle.

Squeezed between the Balkan and the Rodopi Mountains, Bulgaria’s second-largest city has survived for thousands of years on the crossroads between Western Europe and the Middle East. Plovdiv is in central Bulgaria, 144 kilometers (90 miles) southeast of Sofia, the capital.

Plovdiv claims to be the oldest continually inhabited European city, with more than 6,000 years of history. Evidence of that can be seen in many architectural landmarks dating back to Thracian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman times.

The city on both sides of the Maritsa River is also known for its ethnic diversity. Many of its 340,000 inhabitants belong to the country’s Turkish, Roma, Armenian, Greek and Jewish minorities, all of which have quite a strong influence on the city’s vibrant cultural life.

Examples of this influence were presented during the opening music, light and dance show under the motto “Together.”

Big Boi, Travis Scott to join Maroon 5 in Super Bowl show

NEW YORK (AP)—The NFL on Sunday ended months of uncertainty by officially announcing Maroon 5, Big Boi and Travis Scott as the performers at this year’s Super Bowl halftime show.

Maroon 5 had been the widely reported halftime show act since September, but the NFL didn’t confirm the band as its headliner until Sunday. The league said Maroon 5 will be joined by Big Boi, the Atlanta-based rapper from Outkast, and Scott.

Typically one of the most fiercely sought gigs in music, the Super Bowl halftime show has this year been the subject of boycott and protest. Numerous acts have turned down the NFL in support of Colin Kaepernick and other players who have taken a knee during the national anthem in protest of racial injustice.

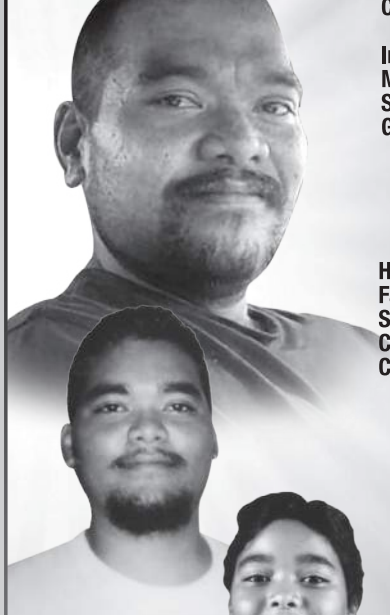
Gerald Griggs, vice president of the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP, has said the NAACP asked performers who have signed up to reconsider their participation. More than 84,000 have signed an online petition urging Maroon 5 to withdraw from the Super Bowl “until the league changes their policy and support players’ constitutional right to protest.”

Billboard reported that Scott, who reportedly signed on in December, only agreed to perform if the NFL made a joint donation to an organization fighting for social justice. With the NFL, Scott made a $500,000 donation to Van Jones’ Dream Corps.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

†Jerry Jesse Basa Reyes

DOB: January 04, 1981 • DOD: January 09, 2019



Born to Life: January 04, 1981
Called to Eternal Rest: January 09, 2019

In his new life he now joins his
Mother: †Francisca Basa
Son: †Jesus Zachery Cruz Reyes
Grandparents: †Nicolas Blas Reyes
†Ignacia Agulto Reyes
†Eulogio Aldan
†Manuel Santos Sablan
†Maria Basa Sablan

He will live forever in the hearts of his:
Father: Jesus A. Reyes
Step-mom: Eloisa I. Reyes
Common-law: Joycelyn M. Techur
Children: Ignacio Mafnas Cruz
David Jesse Mafnas Cruz
Jerrilyn Jane Cruz Reyes
Frances Maria Cruz Reyes
Cloey Lureyce Techur Babauta
Courtney Lureyne Techur Babauta
Jerry Jesse Techur Reyes
Cierra Lucyanna Techur Reyes
Jayven John Techur Reyes
Kayla Lucia Techur Reyes

Siblings: **Jason Joseph B. Reyes**/ Jolynn J. Castro and children
Jesse Jerry B. Reyes/ Nerissa L. Arriola and children
Jeremy Jane B. Reyes/ Dewayne I. Sablan and children
Ignacia Marie B. Reyes and Bradley C. Babauta
Patrick C. Reyes and Jerica T. Pialur
Jessielyn I. Reyes
Josh I. Reyes

He will be dearly missed by numerous uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, other relatives, and friends.

Daily masses of intentions are offered at 6:00 pm (Monday to Friday) and 5:30 pm (Saturday and Sunday) at San Vicente Church.

Our beloved Jerry will be with us for the last time on Thursday, January 17, 2019. †Jerry will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home to Mount Carmel Cathedral at 7:30 am. Responso Service, Holy Rosary, and Public Viewing will follow upon arrival. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 am followed by Interment Services at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be laid to peaceful rest.

Your prayers, presence, and thoughts are sincerely appreciated.

Si Yu’us Ma’ase – Oloomwaay – Thank You

Joycelyn M. Techur, Children,
Jesus A. Reyes and Family

NBC News, Megyn Kelly reach separation agreement

NEW YORK (AP)—NBC News announced its professional divorce agreement with Megyn Kelly late Friday, ending an association with the former Fox News Channel star whose attempt to become a network morning television star as part of the "Today" show floundered.

Terms were not disclosed. Kelly was in the second of a three-year contract that reportedly paid her more than $20 million a year.

She's been off the air since October after creating a furor by suggesting that it was OK for white people to wear blackface on Halloween, and exit negotiations had dragged for two months over the holidays. Even before the controversial commentary, her future was considered limited at NBC News.

"The parties have resolved their differences, and Megyn Kelly is no longer an employee of NBC," the network said in a statement Friday night.

NBC says she'll be replaced in the third hour of the "Today" show by anchors Craig Melvin, Al Roker, Dylan Dreyer and Sheinelle Jones.

Her tenure was also a failure for NBC News Chairman Andrew Lack, who lured her from Fox News Channel with the type of big-money contract that was once standard in television news but now is less so with financial constrictions and less viewership. In a sense, Kelly was caught in a no-woman's land: some at NBC were suspicious of her because of the Fox News background, while her former audience at Fox resented her for tough questioning of Donald Trump on the presidential campaign trail.

While at Fox, her accusations of unwanted sexual advances by the network's late chief executive, Roger Ailes, helped lead to his firing.

She made news at NBC when interviewing women who accused Trump of inappropriate behavior and s poke with accusers of Harvey Weinstein, Bill O'Reilly, Roy Moore and others, as well as women who say they were harassed on Capitol Hill. The episode with Trump accusers had more than 2.9 million viewers, one of her biggest audiences on the network.

AP

In this April 12, 2018 file photo, television journalist Megyn Kelly attends The Hollywood Reporter's annual 35 Most Powerful People in Media event at The Pool in New York.

Time magazine, which honored "The Silence Breakers" as its Person of the Year in 2017, cited Kelly as the group's leader in the entertainment field.

But tough segments on accusations against former NBC anchor Matt Lauer didn't win her friends internally, as did her public call for Lack to appoint outside investigators to look into why the network didn't air Ronan Farrow's stories about Harvey Weinstein and allowed Farrow to take his story to The New Yorker.

When those stories began to fade, Kelly had trouble attracting an audience in the soft-focus world of morning television. She also briefly hosted an evening newsmagazine that didn't catch on with viewers.

Kelly made a tearful apology to viewers following her blackface comments, but it proved to be her last appearance on NBC News.

"What is racist?" she said on the show. "Truly, you do get in trouble if you are a white person who puts on blackface on Halloween or a black person who puts on whiteface for Halloween. Back when I was a kid, that was OK, as long as you were dressing up as a character."

Critics accused her of ignoring the ugly history of minstrel shows and movies in which whites applied blackface to mock blacks.

Kevin Hart's 'The Upside' unseats 'Aquaman' in $19.6M debut

NEW YORK (AP)—Kevin Hart isn't hosting the Oscars, but he's got a number one movie. "The Upside," starring Hart and Bryan Cranston, surpassed expectations to open with $19.6 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The strong performance of "The Upside" pushed "Aquaman" to second after the aquatic superhero's three-week reign atop the North American box office. Warner Bros.' "Aquaman" still passed $1 billion worldwide over the weekend, becoming the first DC Comics release to reach that mark since 2012's "The Dark Knight Rises."

"The Upside" opened on the heels of several weeks of Oscar drama surrounding Hart. The comedian last month withdrew from hosting the Academy Awards , just days after being named emcee, when he initially refused to apologize for years-old homophobic tweets.

On the publicity trail for "The Upside," Hart repeatedly dismissed the Oscar controversy, saying he was "over it," while flirting with the possibility of returning as Oscar host—something for which talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres, in particular, advocated.

Whether all that attention helped raise the profile of "The Upside," a remake of the 2012 French comedy "The Intouchables," was difficult to extrapolate, though it surely didn't hurt. Ticket sales were almost twice industry forecasts. The film received poor reviews (40 percent fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and was slammed by some critics for trading on the kind of gay panic humor that Hart was forced to apologize for.

Neil Burger's film, which cost about $35 million to make, stars Hart as an ex-con who becomes a caretaker for a physically disabled author (Cranston). It was originally to be distributed by the Weinstein Co. Harvey Weinstein premiered the film at the 2017 Toronto International Film Festival just weeks before the many allegations of sexual harassment surfaced against the movie mogul.

STX Entertainment picked up the movie, which on Sunday handed the five-year-old start-up studio its first no. 1 release at the box office. Launched in 2014 with a mission to make the kind of mid-budgeted, star-driven films the studios have increasingly abandoned, STX has had some successes ("Bad Moms," ''The Foreigner," the critically acclaimed "The Edge of Seventeen") but has often struggled to find breakout hits. Last year's "The Happytime Murders," with Melissa McCarthy, was one of the 2017's most glaring flops.

STX's Motion Picture Group Chairman Adam Fogelson pointed to strong audience reaction (an A CinemaScore) and downplayed any effect of the Oscar chatter on "The Upside," noting that Hart "is in the culture constantly for tons of stuff."

AP

This image released by STXfilms shows Bryan Cranston, from left, Jahi Di'Allo Winston, and Kevin Hart in a scene from "The Upside."

Beautiful! Carole King shows up as herself in Broadway bio

NEW YORK (AP) — Anything can happen in live theater, and audience members seeing "Beautiful," the life story of Carole King, got a surprise when King appeared in the role of herself to celebrate the show's fifth anniversary on Broadway.

The packed house at the Stephen Sondheim Theatre erupted into thunderous cheers and applause as King appeared Saturday night, sitting at a baby grand piano and showing all the love in her heart as she sang "Beautiful," the final song.

"It's kind of miraculous that this show has lasted for five years because not many do. And it's a testament to, I think, people say the music ... but the book is so good and the direction and the lighting and the sets. It's really a well put together production," King said in an interview with The Associated Press after the show.

She has sung onstage during curtain calls during the show's long run but has never appeared in the show itself.

In the show's final scene — set during her famous 1971 Carnegie Hall concert — the 76-year-old King played a much younger version of herself as she took over for Chilina Kennedy, who recently returned to the Broadway production of "Beautiful" after playing the King role in the North American tour.

King and the cast then performed the show's encore number, "I Feel the Earth Move," at the curtain call as the audience danced and clapped along. The singer-songwriter held hands with Kennedy as the two took several bows and accepted flowers from the cast.

"Everyone connected with this show will agree that the people we have to thank the most are you, the audiences; please give yourselves a hand," King told the audience, a sea of cellphones snapping pictures.

"It's thanks to you, you who have come once ... twice, three times," she said. "I hear from people who've brought friends, family and shared the joy and shared the love, and it's amazing.

"So if you keep doing that, you never know when I might show up again," she joked.

Among the audience members was Chuck Schumer, the U.S. senator from New York, who waved to the crowd and gestured thumbs up as he exited the theater. "CBS This Morning" anchor Gayle King was also at the show and said it was her fourth time seeing it.

"I love it. I love her," she said. "I still have my 'Tapestry' album."

"Beautiful" is based on King's life from when she was a teenage songwriter in New York, to her time as wife, mother and author of scores of recognizable songs. The show features a collection of famous pop music, written by King and her ex-husband Gerry Goffin, as well as Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil, including the classics "You've Got a Friend," ''One Fine Day," ''Up on the Roof," ''You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" and "Natural Woman."

‘Game of Thrones’ final season to debut on April 14

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Illinois refuses permit for concert to be hosted by R. Kelly

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP)—Illinois officials say a concert in Springfield that was to be hosted by R. Kelly cannot take place in the wake of new sexual misconduct allegations against the R&B star. Illinois Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Denise Albert told the Chicago Tribune that the application for the Spring Break Jam in April was denied Thursday because of security concerns following protests outside Kelly’s Chicago studio this week. Kelly has been under fire since the recent airing of a Lifetime documentary “Surviving R. Kelly .” He has denied all allegations of sexual misconduct involving women and underage girls. A tip that Kelly was holding two women against their will prompted Chicago police to visit his residence Friday in Chicago’s Trump Tower. Officers interviewed Kelly and the women but found no evidence of wrongdoing.

O’Rourke to do Oprah Winfrey interview amid 2020 speculation

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Former Texas Rep. Beto O’Rourke will head to New York next month for a live interview with Oprah Winfrey as he continues to mull a 2020 presidential run. O’Rourke will be part of “Oprah’s SuperSoul Conversations from Times Square” on Feb. 5. He’ll speak to Winfrey one-on-one as part of an event featuring others, including actors Bradley Cooper and Michael B. Jordan. O’Rourke, 46, rose to national Democratic prominence while nearly unseating Republican Sen. Ted Cruz in deep red-Texas last November. Despite other top Democrats taking steps to likely join the 2020 presidential race, O’Rourke’s camp suggests he won’t make up his mind for at least a few more weeks. Winfrey herself has been the subject of 2020 chatter, but has said she doesn’t plan to run.

Half-brother of Meghan Markle arrested on DUI charge

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP)—The half-brother of Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, is facing a drunken-driving charge after an arrest in Oregon. State police said Thomas Wayne Markle Jr. was visibly intoxicated when he was pulled over at about 1:30 a.m. Friday in Josephine County, in southwestern Oregon. Authorities said his blood-alcohol content was 0.11 percent, above the legal limit of 0.08 percent. The 52-year-old from Grants Pass was taken to a detox center. Meghan Markle, a former actress, married Prince Harry last May. They are expecting their first child. The duchess is reportedly estranged from her father’s family. Thomas Markle Sr. said in a television interview last month he had not heard from her since the wedding. Thomas Markle Jr. did not appear to have a listed phone number, and it was not clear how to reach him for comment.

NEW YORK (AP)—”Game of Thrones” fans, get ready.

HBO announced Sunday night that the eighth and final season will begin on April 14. In a one minute and 44 second teaser released Sunday, Arya Stark (Maisie Williams), Sansa Stark (Sophie Turner) and Jon Snow (Kit Harington) are seen in the crypts of Winterfell.

Fans have eagerly awaited the six-episode finale of the show since Season 7 of the popular HBO show ended in August 2017.

The fantasy series based on the George R.R. Martin novels has been one of HBO’s most successful shows.

HBO isn’t getting out of the “Game of Thrones” business. A prequel created by Martin and writer-producer Jane Goldman is underway, with Naomi Watts set to star, and other spinoffs are possible.

‘Green Book’ writer apologizes for old tweet about Muslims

LOS ANGELES (AP)—”Green Book” co-writer Nick Vallelonga has apologized for a 2015 tweet about Muslims and 9/11 that has resurfaced a few days after the film won a Golden Globe Award.

In the tweet, he said then-presidential-candidate Donald Trump was “100% correct” that local television news in New York on 9/11 showed Muslims in Jersey City cheering when the towers came down, and he had seen it.

There is no evidence such celebrations occurred.

“I spent my life trying to bring this story of overcoming differences and finding common ground to the screen, and I am incredibly sorry to everyone associated with ‘Green Book,’” Vallelonga said in a statement Thursday. “I especially deeply apologize to the brilliant and kind Mahershala Ali, and all members of the Muslim faith, for the hurt I have caused.”

AP

In this Jan. 6, 2019 file image released by NBC, Nick Vallelonga accepts the award for best screenplay for “Green Book” during the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif.

He added an apology to his late father Frank Anthony Vallelonga, an actor known professionally as Tony Lip, whose real-life befriending of black concert pianist Don Shirley was the basis for the film. Ali, who is Muslim, plays Shirley and Viggo Mortensen plays the elder Vallelonga.

“’Green Book’ is a story about love, acceptance and overcoming barriers, and I will do better,” the statement said.

Vallelonga has now deleted his Twitter account.

His old tweet began circulating Wednesday just as “Green Book” director Peter Farrelly was apologizing when a 20-year-old story emerged about him flashing his genitals to colleagues as a joke.

“Green Book” won the Golden Globe on Sunday for best musical or comedy movie.

2019 Songwriters Hall class: Missy, Cat Stevens, John Prine

NEW YORK (AP)—Missy Elliott is making history as the first female rapper inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, whose 2019 class also includes legendary British singer Cat Stevens and country-folk icon John Prine.

The organization announced the new group of inductees Saturday. Other inductees include Tom T. Hall, who Johnny Cash called his “all-time favorite songwriter”; Jack Tempchin, who co-wrote songs for the Eagles and Glenn Frey’s solo albums; and Dallas Austin, the songwriter behind radio hits for TLC, Monica, Pink, Boyz II Men, Madonna and more.

Elliott is just the third rapper to enter into the Songwriters Hall, following Jay-Z and Jermaine Dupri’s inductions in 2017 and 2018, respectively. While she’s written her own raps, Elliott has also lent her writing skills to everyone from Beyonce to Whitney Houston to the late icon Aaliyah.

The new class of songwriters will officially be inducted on June 13 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City. Songwriters are eligible for induction after writing hit songs for at least 20 years.

Stevens, who also goes by Yusuf (the name he took when he converted), has been a respected writer since releasing his debut in 1967. He’s had a string of Top 40 hits, from “Peace Train” to “Morning Has Broken.” And “The First Cut Is the Deepest,” which he wrote five decades ago, has become a hit for multiple artists, including Rod Stewart and Sheryl Crow.

Prine’s inclusion is extra-special since he was nominated for this year’s Rock and Roll Hall of Fame but didn’t make the cut. The 72-year-old has become an affable songwriting guru for many of Nashville’s talented young artists, including rocker Dan Auerbach of the Black Keys, country rebel Sturgill Simpson, and the married Americana darlings Jason Isbell and Amanda Shires.

Wife gets the silent treatment without knowing reason why

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married more than 20 years. Once in a while, he'll stop being affectionate and ceases talking to me. Obviously, he is upset. He holds it together for our children, but I get the serious cold shoulder.

He won't tell me why he is unhappy. He simply expects me to give him "space." This is difficult because I assume it's something I have done, and I want to make it right. After several days, he'll start coming around and talking to me again, and he expects me to jump right back into our usual behavior. But by this time I feel abandoned and resentful.

It generally takes me some time to warm back up to him, which doesn't make him very happy since he doesn't see anything wrong with his needing space. I realize that's true, but should I be expected to put aside my hurt feelings overnight? How can I deal with these difficult days so I won't feel so alone and get upset with him? And what should I do when he expects me to bounce right back?

TIED IN KNOTS IN TEXAS

DEAR TIED IN KNOTS: You're in a long marriage. Has your husband always behaved this way? Talk to him about it at a time when he's himself and not in one of his silent phases.

As you should be aware by now, not all men are good at expressing their feelings. Rather than become upset with him, ASK if he is upset with you. If the answer is no, believe him and give him his space. It would be considerate (and mature) of him, however, to warn you when he's upset about something that has nothing to do with you, without prompting.

DEAR ABBY: Is there an organization that matches seniors who would love to be grandmothers with families that need grandparents for their child/children?

I'm a 70-year-old recent widow who has no grandchildren to love, take places, play games with or just be with. I would think in every city there are children with no seniors in their lives, seniors who could make great grandparents. It would be a win-win for both the child and the senior. It could also be a blessing for a single mother or father to have someone to help out with emergency child care or just have some extra "family" in their hometown.

UNFULFILLED GRANDMA IN MINNESOTA

DEAR UNFULFILLED: Unless the parents get to know you well, it isn't likely they would entrust their children to your care. However, this doesn't mean you cannot volunteer your time to help children in need. One organization is Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (bbbs.org), which offers opportunities to mentor. Another that might appeal to you is Foster Grandparents, which is sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

You could also call the hospitals in your area and ask if they need someone to come in on a regular basis to hold and rock premature infants and newborns. If you contact CASA for Children (casaforchildren.org), you could become a court-appointed advocate for abused and neglected children and teens, which may provide the emotional satisfaction you need and fill the void you are feeling.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

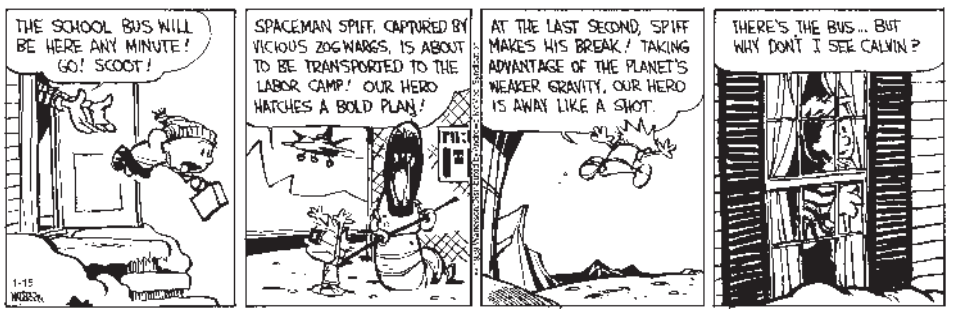
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


THE SCHOOL BUS WILL BE HERE ANY MINUTE! GO! SCOOT!
SPACEMAN SPIFF, CAPTURED BY VICIOUS ZOGWARGS, IS ABOUT TO BE TRANSPORTED TO THE LABOR CAMP! OUR HERO HATCHES A BOLD PLAN!
AT THE LAST SECOND, SPIFF MAKES HIS BREAK! TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE PLANET'S WEAKER GRAVITY, OUR HERO IS AWAY LIKE A SHOT.
THERE'S THE BUS... BUT WHY DON'T I SEE CALVIN?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

WHAT ARE THOSE MICE DOING IN THE LIVING ROOM?!
I BELIEVE THAT'S THE HOKEY-POKEY
GARFIELD...
HANG ON, NOW THEY'RE DOING A CONGA LINE
JIM DAVIS 1-15

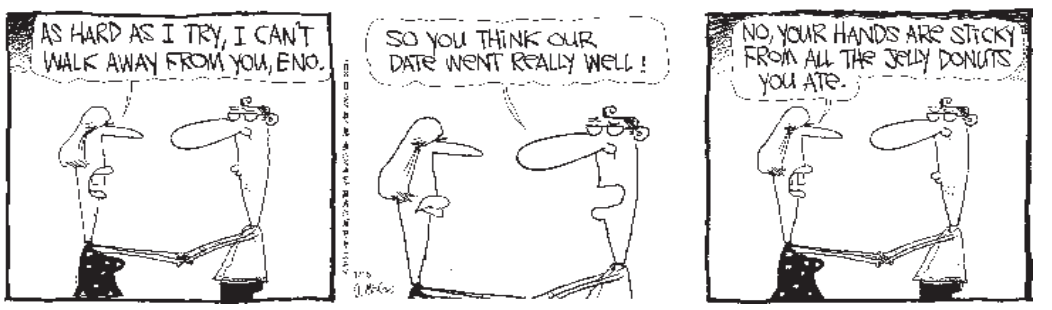
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I NEED HELP.
I'LL SAY.
NO, SERIOUSLY. I'M HOOKED ON THAT GAME, "SNEAKYBLOB." HOOKED BAD.
IT'S IN MY HEAD. I KEEP SEEING OPPONENT BLOBS EVERYWHERE I LOOK.
GET A GRIP, MAN.
AAAA!!
YOU JUST NEED TO UNPLUG, DEAR.
HARPELL

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


AS HARD AS I TRY, I CAN'T WALK AWAY FROM YOU, ENO.
SO YOU THINK OUR DATE WENT REALLY WELL!
NO, YOUR HANDS ARE STICKY FROM ALL THE JELLY DONUTS YOU ATE.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Tub session
5 Petrol
8 Micro-waves
12 Jai —
13 Dadaist artist
14 Vicinity
15 Home to the Bucca-neers
17 Fish feature
18 Evening hrs.
19 Whirl
21 Jazz genre
24 Cross-word hint
25 Former mates
26 Tur-quoise-like color
30 Mimic
31 Rib
32 Ltr. holder
33 Pentagon VIPs
35 Broad
36 The Eternal City
37 Golfer's wear
38 Calms
41 Actor Holbrook
42 Canal zone
43 Dorm room sleepers
48 Curved molding
49 Corn spike
50 Pakistani language
51 Office plant
52 Reuben bread
53 Grate

DOWN

1 Cudgel
2 Pie — mode
3 Highland hat
4 Zoo heavy-weights
5 Yaks
6 Coach Par-seghian
7 Small telescope
8 Capital of Croatia
9 Operatic solo
10 Hide
11 Auction
16 Sound booster
20 Year-end celebra-tion
21 Tempo
22 Big fair, for short
23 Pager sound
24 Stop
26 Trucker in a union
27 Floral rings
28 Nullify
29 Always
31 Helen's home
34 Impudent
35 Orville's brother
37 Moving day rental
38 Starting
39 Olympic sled
40 Lusty look
41 Employ
44 Path
45 Epoch
46 License to drill?
47 Dine

Solution time: 22 mins.

M	I	A		T	O	T	E	S		C	B	S
A	S	H		U	B	O	A	T		H	A	L
C	H	A	R	L	O	T	T	E		A	B	A
			D	I	I		A	R	A	R	A	T
R	E	C	A	P	S		T	E	R	I		
A	C	H		S	T	Y		O	C	T	E	T
S	C	A	T		S	E	T		S	I	R	I
H	E	P	O	D		W	O	W		E	L	
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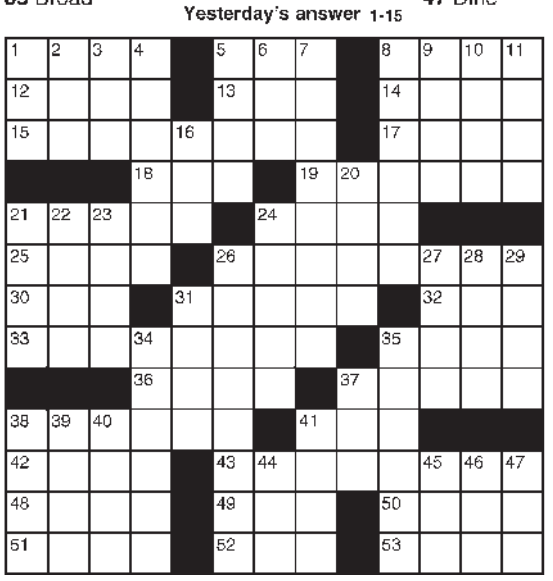
A	R	C	A	N	A		A	S	K			
S	A	T		C	H	A	R	L	A	T	A	N
A	G	E		E	T	U	D	E		A	V	I
P	A	F		S	I	S	S	Y		J	A	B

Yesterday's answer 1-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Drew Brees, 40; Regina King, 48; Chad Lowe, 51; Mario Van Peebles, 62.

Happy Birthday: Turn this into a year to remember. Stop thinking about what you want to do or to have; make your dream come true. Making plans with someone you enjoy working with or being around will lead to a better relationship as well as progress toward achieving your goals. Use your energy wisely. Fitness and manual labor will bring better results than anger. Your numbers are 5, 13, 23, 25, 33, 38, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Stop being in such a rush. Do it right the first time so you won't have to go back and fix the errors you made. Look at the big picture and focus on perfection as well as completion. Romance is highlighted. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Make a point to take care of your responsibilities yourself. If you rely on others, you will end up being disappointed. Take a closer look at an opportunity to see a way to make it work for you. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Put your time and effort into partnerships. Know what you want, and don't be afraid to ask for it. The only way positive change will happen is if you initiate it yourself. Don't wait; just do it. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Ignore what others do; move on to whatever you want to accomplish. If you waste time stewing over situations you cannot change, you will miss out on a chance to do something great. Let your creative imagination lead the way. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Don't give up when you should be getting started. Take a new approach to an old plan, and you'll discover a way to make it work. A personal change will improve your life, your appearance or your health. Romance is featured. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Network, socialize, plan a gathering or take on a creative project. Most of all, keep moving. Don't let someone bring you down because he or she isn't interested in what's important to you. Avoid indulgent or costly situations. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Not so fast. Before you decide to implement change, you'd be wise to find out if anyone disapproves or if there are regulations you need to abide by. Avoid discord, do your own thing and make physical improvements. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Listen to what others plan to do, and consider how you can contribute. Participating will be a good way to meet new people and build stronger relationships. Don't feel you have to keep up or pay for others. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Stick close to home. Set goals and get things done. Purge what you don't need, and make room for people and things that bring you the most joy. Don't trust someone who is trying to butter you up with compliments. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Pay closer attention to what's going on at home. How you treat loved ones will make a difference when you want someone close to you to pitch in and help. Home improvements will add to your convenience and comfort. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Don't let an emotional incident get in the way of your responsibilities. Take care of business first to avoid getting into an argument that will disrupt your plans. Work and physical exertion will help ease stress. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Someone you have worked with will have a suggestion that will help you get ahead. Networking will encourage you to update your resume or present your skills differently. Your intuition will help you make good choices. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are friendly, sincere and helpful. You are goal-oriented and stylish.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2	9	4		7			
	4			5				
7		6		1				9
3						4		
9		4				3		2
	5							1
1				9		6		7
			7				2	
		8		6	1	5		

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

1	6	3	8	7	5	9	4	2
7	5	4	1	9	2	6	8	3
2	8	9	4	3	6	7	5	1
9	1	6	7	5	4	3	2	8
5	4	8	6	2	3	1	9	7
3	2	7	9	8	1	5	6	4
4	3	5	2	6	7	8	1	9
8	7	2	5	1	9	4	3	6
6	9	1	3	4	8	2	7	5

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

REUBEN SANDWICHES Solution: 10 letters

C	R	U	N	C	H	Y	H	S	M	U	I	D	O	S
E	N	J	O	Y	C	C	U	C	U	M	B	E	R	E
A	V	N	O	I	N	O	Y	C	I	P	S	G	O	L
D	U	R	L	B	U	T	T	E	R	W	O	U	M	K
E	E	C	E	E	L	L	I	R	G	O	D	H	A	C
F	G	K	H	S	K	A	D	A	E	R	B	N	H	I
E	O	O	O	E	R	C	U	Y	E	L	S	R	A	P
E	L	O	I	M	E	E	I	S	Ⓡ	E	D	I	L	S
B	D	C	L	R	S	S	Z	N	A	Ⓨ	K	S	O	E
D	E	E	S	C	G	K	E	I	R	C	Ⓔ	U	A	O
E	N	C	R	A	A	W	I	S	T	E	P	N	D	T
N	O	I	R	N	Y	S	U	L	S	E	P	E	E	A
R	J	L	T	O	A	S	T	T	L	I	P	M	D	T
O	I	S	R	L	G	N	I	T	A	E	W	P	U	O
C	D	K	T	A	E	M	I	M	A	R	T	S	A	P

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Appetizers, Bread, Butter, Canola, Casual, Cheese, Cook, Corned Beef, Crunchy, Cucumber, Dijon, Eating, Enjoy, Garlic, Golden, Gooey, Grill, Huge, Loaded, Lunch, Meat, Menus, New York, Oils, Omaha, Onion, Parsley, Pastrami, Pickles, Potatoes, Pumpernickel, Rye, Salt, Sandwich, Serve, Skillet, Slice, Sliders, Smoked, Sodium, Soup, Spicy, Swiss, Toast

Yesterday's Answer: Ensemble Cast

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 39 through 54, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Saints oust Eagles; Patriots rout Chargers

AP

New Orleans Saints wide receiver Michael Thomas (13) is tackled by Philadelphia Eagles middle linebacker Jordan Hicks (58) in the first half of an NFL divisional playoff football game in New Orleans, Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019.

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The New Orleans Saints got two touchdown passes from Drew Brees, two interceptions by Marcus Lattimore, and rallied from a 14-point deficit to beat the Philadelphia Eagles 20-14 Sunday to advance to the NFC championship game.

Using a dominant ball-control offense after a horrendous start, Brees took the Saints (14-3) on scoring drives of 92, 79 and 67 yards. And a few gambles paid off to assure New Orleans will host the Rams (13-4) next Sunday for a spot in the Super Bowl.

Los Angeles, which fell 45-35 at the Superdome in November, will try again next week, with the winner taking on either Kansas City or New England in the Super Bowl in Atlanta. The Saints' win finished off a sweep of the divisional round by teams coming off byes.

Wil Lutz added two field goals for the Saints, who last got this far in 2009, when they won the Super Bowl.

Philadelphia (10-8) will not repeat as NFL champion; no team has done so since the 2004 Patriots.

These were really two games in one. Philly scored on its first two drives as the Saints could do virtually nothing right.

After that opening period, it was all New Orleans, yet the resilient Eagles kept it close enough that when Lutz missed a 52-yard field goal with 2:58 remaining, they were only one-score behind.

Nick Foles, the hero of last year's Super Bowl run, got them in position for yet another late winning score—just like last week at Chicago and last February against New England for the championship.

Then Alshon Jeffery couldn't handle a second-down pass from the Saints 27 and Lattimore grabbed his second interception to clinch the win.

In Massachusetts, Sony Michel ran for 129 yards and had three touchdowns and New England beat Los Angeles, 41-28, in the divisional playoffs to earn its eighth straight trip to the AFC championship game.

New England (12-5) will play at Kansas City in next week's AFC title game. The Patriots beat the Chiefs 43-40 in Foxborough in Week 6. The Patriots finished 9-0 at home this season.

It is the 13th conference championship game appearance by the Patriots during the Tom Brady-Bill Belichick era.

The Chargers (13-5) haven't reached the AFC title game since the 2007 season.

Philip Rivers finished 25 of 51 for 331 yards, three touchdowns and an interception. He is 0-5 in games played in Foxborough, including 0-3 in the postseason.

Brady finished 34 of 44 for 343 yards and a touchdown. He improves to 8-0 as a starter against Rivers, who drops to 1-8 against New England all-time.

James White tied Darren Sproles' NFL postseason record with 15 catches, totaling 97 yards.

New England scored on its first four possessions of the game to build a 35-7 halftime lead.

Julian Edelman had nine catches for 151 yards.

Foles faces uncertain future after magic with Eagles runs out

NEW ORLEANS–Nick Foles walked off the field Sunday night and into a future of uncertainty.

Oh, sure, he'll have a job next season in the NFL.

But the Eagles quarterback, who led the team on a magical ride to the Super Bowl last season, then to four straight victories and a return trip to the playoffs this season, could very well have thrown his last pass as an Eagle on Sunday night.

It's a future that Foles wasn't ready to address yet after the Eagles lost to the Saints 20-14 and were eliminated from the Divisional Round of the NFL playoffs.

"You know, I'm not really going to worry about it right now," Foles said. "I think I'm just going to do what I can to enjoy this flight back home with my teammates, and we'll see what happens. I do know that we went out there and gave it everything we had tonight, and that's where everyone has to keep their heads held high because that's what it's about."

Foles was starting in place of Carson Wentz, who's out with a stress fracture in his back.

The Eagles have repeatedly said they are committed to Wentz as their franchise quarterback. So to bring Foles back as a backup wouldn't make much sense.

For one, they would owe Foles $20 million for next season, an exorbitant amount for a backup quarterback.

Secondly, Foles has always wanted to start again in the NFL. He reiterated that Sunday night after completing 18 of 31 passes for 201 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions. Foles can pay the Eagles $2 million back to become a free agent.

"Yeah," he said when asked if he wants to start again. "I mean, we'll see what happens in the future. Once again, I'm not going to speculate on that. But yeah, I love to lead a team. I love being in the huddle, being a part of a locker room, doing that. That's why I play the game."

It wasn't one of Foles' finest games.

But he did give the Eagles a chance to win the game after they took over with 2:58 left, trailing by six points. He got the Eagles to the Saints' 27 with just under two minutes remaining. On second down, his pass over the middle to Alshon Jeffery went through his hands and into the arms of Saints cornerback Marshon Lattimore.

Just like that, the Eagles' season was over.

Still, Foles will always be remembered and revered for leading the run to the Super Bowl last season, taking over that December when Wentz tore two knee ligaments. He was named the MVP of the NFL's championship game.

This season, Foles replaced Wentz after the Dec. 9 loss to the Cowboys and led four straight must-win games for the Eagles, including a playoff victory over the Chicago Bears last Sunday.

Even against the Saints, Foles led the Eagles to two touchdowns and a 14-0 lead on the first two drives. The first was a 37-yard pass to Jordan Matthews, the second a 1-yard quarterback sneak.

But Foles couldn't keep his magical run going

Even his teammates knew this could have been his last game in Philadelphia.

Young Cowboys have hope, but divisional-round block remains

FRISCO, Texas (AP)—Dak Prescott and Ezekiel Elliott have their first playoff win and the same divisional-round block the Dallas Cowboys haven't been able to solve for nearly 25 years.

The star quarterback and running back figure to be leading the Dallas offense for years to come with new No. 1 receiver Amari Cooper, acquired midseason for the Cowboys' first-round pick in this year's draft.

Combined with a promising young defense that was humbled in a 30-22 divisional loss to the Los Angeles Rams, Prescott and crew have hope they can get the Cowboys within a win of the Super Bowl for the first time since the franchise's fifth championship following the 1995 season.

But Dallas has been here before: six divisional losses since Hall of Famers Troy Aikman, Emmitt Smith and Michael Irvin last led the Cowboys to more than one win in the same postseason.

Two of the losses have been with Prescott and Elliott, the other to Green Bay as the NFC's top seed when they were rookies two years ago.

"We have a lot of guys that have the right makeup to make sure that we get back here, and to hopefully get past this round," Prescott said. "You're going to lose guys and guys are going to be gone, sometimes coaches. And, that's the unfortunate part about it.

"So, right now it's just about enjoying this time, with these guys and with this team. Then it's moving forward, and getting back to this point and getting past this point."

After losing on some last-second magic by Aaron Rodgers at home to end the 2016 season, the Cowboys missed the playoffs last season when Elliott was suspended six games halfway through the season on domestic violence allegations.

Dallas recovered from a 3-5 start to win the NFC East with a 7-1 finish, then beat Seattle 24-22 in the wild-card round. The new part of the experience was a divisional game on the road. For one of the few times this season, the defense had the big letdown for Dallas, allowing a Dallas playoff-record 273 yards rushing.

"We'll treat this season just like those past seasons," safety Jeff Heath said in a nearly deserted locker room Sunday, about 16 hours after the loss to the Rams.

"It's a tough lesson to learn last night of just how switched on you have to be in a game like that and how the margin for error's so small when you're on the road in the playoffs."

The biggest question on contracts for the core of the Dallas offense is whether Prescott gets an extension before the final year of the fourth-round pick's four-year rookie deal.

The Cowboys are all but certain to exercise the fifth-year option on Elliott, which would take him through 2020, and the Raiders had already done that with Cooper for next season before the trade.

Cole Beasley is an unrestricted free agent after proving to be an effective slot receiver on the four-year contract he just finished. Tavon Austin, acquired in a trade during last year's draft, offers similar skills with more speed.

Cavs stun Lakers to end 12-game losing streak

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Cedi Osman scored 20 points, Collin Sexton added 17 and the Cleveland Cavaliers ended a 12-game losing streak with a 101-95 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday night.

Tristan Thompson had 15 points and 14 rebounds, and Alec Burks had 17 points and 13 rebounds as the shorthanded Cavaliers split the two-game season series by forcing the Lakers into a half-court game.

Kyle Kuzma had 29 points and nine rebounds for the Lakers, who have lost two straight and five of their past seven. Brandon Ingram scored 22 points and Lonzo Ball had 13 points, eight rebounds and eight assists.

Los Angeles was 7 for 34 on 3-pointers and had 11 fast-break points.

Burks delivered an emphatic dunk after Ingram couldn't handle a defensive rebound to help the Cavaliers re-establish control after Kuzma scored five straight to cut the Cavaliers' lead to 84-79 midway though the four quarter.

Sexton drove for a layup and Osman hit a floater during a quick 6-0 run, which allowed the Cavaliers to hold off another late push by the Lakers. Kuzma hit a 3-pointer with 22 seconds remaining to trim the margin to 96-93, but Burks made both free throws with 16 to play.

The Cavaliers had a 10-0 run in the third quarter after Kuzma hit a floater to pull the Lakers within 51-50 early in the period. Burks and Osman hit 3-pointers to bookend the push, and Cleveland was able to sustain the 10-point margin going into the fourth by holding Los Angeles to 8-for-26 shooting.

Raptors 140, Wizards 138 2OT

In Washington, the Toronto Raptors began with a rush. They scored the first nine points against the Wizards, built a 19-point lead in the first quarter and went ahead by 23 in the second quarter.

Near the end of the third quarter, Toronto still led by 17 points. Then Washington got hot and forced one overtime, and then another.

Serge Ibaka's 3-pointer with 15 seconds left in the second overtime allowed the Raptors to survive and earn their fifth straight win.

"It shouldn't come down to the last possession," Kawhi Leonard said. "We need to close out games better."

Leonard, who played a season-high 45 minutes, led Toronto with 41 points and 11 rebounds.

"Tonight he played like a superstar," Ibaka said. "That's how we need him to play and he did his job as a superstar. When we need him to step up and make big plays, he did them for us."

Bradley Beal had his second triple-double of the season, collecting a season-high 43 points and matching a career high with 15 assists along with 10 assists. His 3-pointer with 20.4 seconds left in regulation tied it at 124 to force overtime. His jumper with 6.8 seconds to play in the first overtime tied it at 131.

Washington never led until early in the second overtime.

Leonard had 13 straight points in the fourth quarter and overtime. Toronto missed seven of nine from the field in the second OT and didn't score for nearly 3½ minutes, but Washington could only push ahead by three points during that stretch.

"We got lucky to get out of here with a win," Raptors coach Nick Nurse said.

Pascal Siakim scored 24 and had a career-high 19 rebounds for the Raptors.

Otto Porter, who had 27 points, missed a 3-pointer with six seconds to play in the second OT.

Trevor Ariza narrowly missed his second career triple-double. He had 23 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds before fouling out with 44.7 seconds left.

Bucks 133, Hawks 114

In Atlanta, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 33 points, Eric Bledsoe added 24 points and 10 assists, and Milwaukee won in coach Mike Budenholzer's return to Atlanta.

Khris Middleton finished with 17 points and 11 rebounds to help the Bucks improve to 30-12, second-best in the NBA. Coming off a loss at Washington that Antetokounmpo missed with injuries, Milwaukee is 12-0 following a defeat and remained the league's only team not to drop consecutive games.

Budenholzer made his first appearance at State Farm Arena since leaving the Hawks after last season. Trae Young led Atlanta with 26 points.

76ers 108, Knicks 105

In New York, Ben Simmons had 20 points, 22 rebounds and nine assists, and Joel Embiid scored 26 points to help Philadelphia beat New York.

New York's Emmanuel Mudiay missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer. Kevin Knox scored 31 points for the Knicks. They have lost four straight and 19 of 22.

Magic 116, Rockets 109

In Orlando, Nikola Vucevic and Aaron Gordon each scored 22 points and the Orlando Magic took advantage of James Harden's awful 3-point shooting to beat the Houston Rockets.

Harden scored 38 points to push his run of 30-point games to 16, but was 1 of 17 from 3-point range and 11 of 32 overall from the field. He made 15 of 16 free throws and had 12 assists and nine rebounds.

Evan Fournier and Terrence Ross each had 17 points for Orlando. The Magic were coming off a 105-103 home victory over Boston on Saturday night.

Austin Rivers scored 25 points, and Clint Capela had 17 points and 10 rebounds for Houston. The Rockets lost for only the fourth time in their last 17 games.

Warriors 119, Mavericks 114

In Dallas, Stephen Curry scored 48 points, making 11 3-pointers, and the Golden State Warriors held off the Dallas Mavericks.

Kevin Durant added 28 points and Klay Thompson had nine of his 16 in the fourth quarter.

Curry's 11th 3-pointer—tying a season high—gave the Warriors a 117-114 lead.

Draymond Green blocked Jalen Brunson's drive at the other end and secured the loose ball. The Mavericks forced a miss, but Harrison Barnes turned the ball over in the frontcourt with 5 seconds left. Curry sealed the game with free throws.

Luka Doncic scored 26 points for Dallas and Barnes had 22. Brunson had 12 off the bench in 30 minutes, in place of the injured J.J. Barea and Dennis Smith Jr.

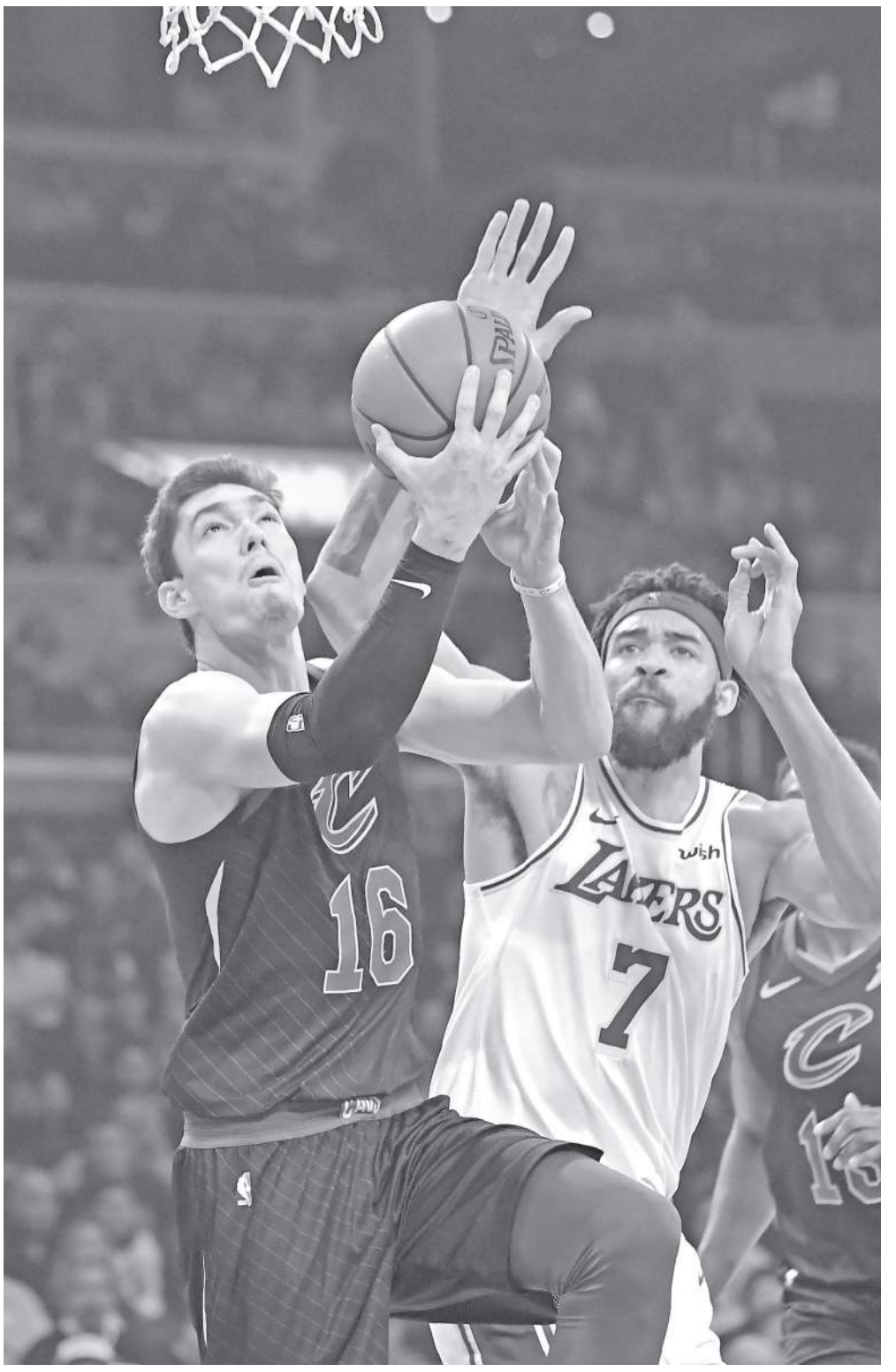
Nuggets116, Trail Blazers 113

In Denver, Nikola Jokic scored a season-high 40 points, Jamal Murray fought through a bloody lip to add 24 and Denver beat Portland.

Jokic finished a point off his career high. He added 10 rebounds and eight assists, just missing his sixth-triple double of the season. Murray's lip was bloodied when he took an elbow to the mouth from Jusuf Nurkic on a drive to the basket early in the third quarter.

Denver rebounded from a loss at Phoenix on Saturday night for its 12th home win in a row.

Damian Lillard led Portland with 26 points, and CJ McCollum had 18 points.



AP

Cleveland Cavaliers forward Cedi Osman, left, shoots as Los Angeles Lakers center JaVale McGee defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Asian Cup: Qatar, 4-time champion Japan advance

AL AIN, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Qatar thrashed North Korea 6-0 on Sunday and advanced to the knockout stages of the Asian Cup after the biggest win in this tournament so far.

Saudi Arabia, which beat Lebanon 2-0 on Saturday for its second straight victory, will join Qatar in the round of 16 from Group E. Amid diplomatic tensions between the two countries, Qatar and Saudi Arabia meet Thursday in a game which will decide the group winner.

Four-time champion Japan and Uzbekistan also made the next round with a game to spare in Group F. Japan beat Oman 1-0 on Sunday and Uzbekistan routed Turkmenistan 4-0.

The top two teams in each group and the four best third-placed teams advance to the round of 16.

Qatar, the 2022 World Cup host, has been subject to a diplomatic and logistical boycott by regional rivals, including Saudi Arabia, for more than 18 months.

After a goal in the opening 2-0 victory over Lebanon, Qatar star striker Almoez Ali added four more to become the tournament's leading scorer. He struck twice within two minutes early in the first half to give Qatar a comfortable lead with two more goals in the second half.

Ali has scored nine goals in his last eight games for his country.

Boualem Khoukhi and Abdelkarim Hassan also had a goal apiece for Qatar, which won two opening Asian Cup games for the first time.

In Abu Dhabi, Genki Haraguchi earned the penalty and then converted from the spot in the 28th minute for Japan.

In Dubai, Eldor Shomurodov led Uzbekistan with two goals and Javokhir Sidikov and Jaloliddin Masharipov also scored—all in the first half.

Japan and Uzbekistan meet on Thursday to decide the group's top spot.

In last Saturday's results, Iran and Iraq advanced to the knockout stages with a game to spare.

Three-time champion Iran beat Vietnam 2-0 and secured its spot in the round of 16 when 2015 semifinalist Iraq beat Yemen 3-0 in another Group D game.

It was a record ninth successive victory for Iran in Asian Cup group matches. Asia's top-ranked team has dominated possession and looked comfortable in its opening two games, scoring seven goals without conceding.

Nadal, Sharapova win in straight sets

AP

Russia's Maria Sharapova makes a forehand return to Britain's Harriet Dart during their first round match at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Monday, Jan. 14, 2019.

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Rafael Nadal has missed a lot of tennis since last September. He hasn't missed a beat.

The No. 2-seeded Nadal had a 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 win over Australian wild-card entry James Duckworth on Monday in the first round of the Australian Open, his first match back on Rod Laver Arena since he had to retire during his quarterfinal match last year.

The 17-time major winner hasn't played since retiring from his semifinal at the U.S. Open because of a knee injury, and then had surgery on his right ankle in November. He also withdrew from a tune-up tournament in Brisbane because of a muscle strain in his thigh, mainly as a precaution, to ensure he's fit for the season-opening major.

"Not easy to come back after a lot of months of competition, especially against a player playing super aggressive every shot," Nadal said. "It's very difficult to start after an injury—I know it very well.

"So that's an important victory because is the first victory since a while, and at the same time, because that gives me the chance to be on court again."

Wearing a sleeveless top, he showed no signs of any issues against Duckworth. His only hiccup came when he served for the match in the ninth game of the third set and was broken. He returned the favor quickly, though, to seal his spot in the second round.

Nadal has only lost twice in the first round at Grand Slams — to Steve Darcis at 2013 Wimbledon, and to Fernando Verdasco here in 2016.

Meanwhile, Maria Sharapova's record in the first round is good, too. She was the first of five Australian Open winners to play on Rod Laver Arena on Day 1, starting with a 6-0, 6-0 win over Harriet Dart. No. 2-ranked Angelique Kerber, the 2016 Australian Open champion, opened with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Polona Hercog.

Sharapova has the second-best record among active women's players in first-round matches at the majors, and she gave an illustration of why that's the case in a 63-minute disposal of Dart.

Stung by a first-round loss at Wimbledon last year, 2008 Australian Open champion Sharapova said she couldn't afford to feel any empathy for Dart.

"There is no time for that, I'm sorry to say ... when you're playing the first round of a Grand Slam," said Sharapova, who is still feeling pain in her right shoulder despite sitting out the end of last season after the U.S. Open. "I think I was just focused on not having a letdown."

Also advancing were 2017 U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens, No. 9 Kiki Bertens, No. 11 Aryna Sabalenka, No. 19 Caroline Garcia, No. 20 Anett Kontaveit, No. 24 Lesia Tsurenko, No. 29 Donna Vekic and No. 31 Petra Martic.

Danielle Collins reached the second round of a major for the first time following a 2-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4 win over No. 14-seeded Julia Goerges, who won the title in Auckland to start the season.

Katie Boulter earned the distinction of winning the first 10-point tiebreaker under the Australian Open's new system for deciding sets, and she celebrated twice.

Boulter beat Ekaterina Makarova 6-0, 4-6, 7-6 (6), including 10-6 in the tiebreaker. Boulter started celebrating and went to the net when she reached 7-4 in the tiebreaker, forgetting it wasn't a conventional count.

The new rule was introduced to ensure matches don't get too lengthy — previously the third set in women's matches and the fifth set in men's matches at the Australian Open had to be decided by a two-game advantage.

Fifth-seeded Kevin Anderson won his first match at Melbourne Park since 2015 when he beat Adrian Mannarino 6-3, 5-7, 6-2, 6-1. Also advancing on the men's side were No. 14 Stefanos Tsitsipas, no. 18 Diego Schwartzman, No. 19 Nikoloz Basilashvili, No. 20 Grigor Dimitrov, No. 26 Fernando Verdasco and No. 27 Alex de Minaur, who won the Sydney International final on the weekend.

Phillies emerge as clear-cut favorite to land Harper

LOS ANGELES — The Philadelphia Phillies, and not the Washington Nationals, have emerged as the clear-cut favorite to sign free-agent outfielder Bryce Harper after meeting with him for five hours Saturday in Las Vegas, sources said.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of ongoing negotiations, but the Phillies have become the most aggressive team in their pursuit for Harper while the Nationals' interest appears to be waning. Nationals executives are now calling a reunion with Harper a "long shot."

The Phillies, who also have interest in signing free-agent infielder Manny Machado, have yet to make an official offer to Harper, but are confident they will sign at least one of the two free-agent megastars. They were strongly encouraged about their chances of signing Harper after meeting with him, his wife and agent Scott Boras in Harper's hometown. It was their first face-to-face meeting, which included two slide-show presentations by the Phillies. They are expected to make a formal offer within a week.

The Chicago White Sox and Nationals showed strong interest in Harper early this winter, but the White Sox have yet to make an offer to Harper, and the Nats have not formally engaged with Harper for nearly a month.

Harper turned down a 10-year, $300 million contract proposal that was slightly deferred in September by the Nationals, where he has played his entire career. He met again with owner Ted Lerner on Dec. 22 at his Palm Springs, Calif., home, but there was no inclination that he would take less money or the Nats would raise their offer. Now, that offer might no longer even be available. The Nationals have spent $189 million in free agency this winter, and if they sign Harper, will go over the luxury tax for at least several years.

Nats officials privately say Harper no longer is in their plans, and unless Lerner changes his mind or Harper accepts a contract that pays him less than $25 million a year, they anticipate life without him.

Really, the only $200 million-plus question for the Phillies is whether they sign Harper or Machado. They are prepared to make the largest offer to each of them.

Who knows, maybe even both, with the Phillies refusing to rule out the possibility of having the two 26-year-old superstars on one team.

The White Sox, meanwhile, have focused their attention this past month on Machado, offering him a contract for about $200 million. They also traded for his brother-in-law, Yonder Alonso, and signed his close friend, Jon Jay. Their optimism is also growing, believing that if the Phillies sign Harper, they might be the only true remaining suitor for Machado.

The New York Yankees, who were presumed to be the early favorite for Machado, hosted him last month, but they now have no intention of offering him a mega-contract. They unofficially declared themselves out of the running weeks ago, and on Friday signed infielder D.J. LeMahieu to a two-year, $24 million contract. No other teams have publicly expressed their interest in Machado.

Certainly, there's no deadline to sign Harper or Machado, but with one month remaining before spring training, the Phillies and White Sox would love to reach deals as soon as possible to maximize their season-ticket sales.

No one knows the outcome for sure, but unless there's a dramatic twist in these negotiations, their ultimate destinations are becoming clearer.

Harper will be in Philadelphia and Machado will be playing for the White Sox.

CAROL

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mark leads the roster, joining 45 other Top 100 players in the world.

Lee, despite getting eliminated in AGL Loy Yang Traralgon Junior International, moved up into the rankings—from No. 175 (combined doubles and singles) at the end of 2018 to No. 152 (as of Jan. 7, 2019). She achieved her highest ranking (No. 150) last Dec. 29, 2018 after earning ranking points from two tournaments in Mexico.

GCA

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school games yesterday (incidentally against Agape) to give last-minute instructions to his middle school crew.

As for Agape 1, it will play in its first finals game today and the Torchbearers are looking to further cement their legacy in the league by triumphing in the winner-take-all match and pulling off an upset over the highly favored GCA 1. Agape 1 marched into the finals after eliminating GCA 2.

The stage for the Agape 1-GCA 1 title showdown was earlier set in October last year, but was suspended twice. The finale was first pushed back after Super Typhoon Yutu hit Saipan late October. The championship game was reset for December, but was rescheduled anew, as a neutral venue was unavailable.

Meanwhile, before the finals match, Mt. Carmel and GCA 2 will be vying for third place honors at 3:30pm.

'CRANK'

From Page 28

newal of ties with UFC a few days after a story on the Top 10 fights of 2018 came out at the company's website. His bout with Omaha native Drew Dober in January—his third straight Fight of the Night honor—was included on the list and Camacho had mixed feelings about the recognition.

"It's quite bittersweet. I am happy the fans and the UFC appreciate the island style, never give up, fighting spirit I bring to the cage every time. However, I am in the UFC to win instead of getting fight of the night awards. Every fight, I go in there with the mindset to win. And I've been so lucky to share the cage with classy martial artists that have the same willingness to win as well," Camacho said.

"I'm a competitor at heart and the win is what I aim for. I am really just so ecstatic how the Marianas is on the map for a Top 10 level fight at the highest level of martial arts competition. More to come in 2019! Time to Crank it up!"

East Asian Football Federation Referee Development Course

PHOTOS By JILL ESPIRITU/GUAM FOOTBALL

Five-time AFC Referee of the Year Sachiko Yamagishi listens to a question from one of the participants in the East Asian Football Federation Referee Development Course held in Guam last week.

Course participants have a discussion during the practical part of their lesson.

Taka Borja checks on the play at the field while working as a lineman.

Course instructor Sachiko Yamagishi gives pointers to Floyd Muna.

Assistant instructor Ruselle Zapanta gestures during a classroom session of the course.

Sebastien Manabat makes a call during a situational play.

Don Cabrera, third left, explains something to course instructor Sachiko Yamagishi.

CNMI representatives to the course have a discussion during the classroom session, while Ruselle Zapanta looks on.

Saints oust Eagles; Patriots rout Chargers

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Cavs stun Lakers to end 12-game losing streak

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'Crank' signs 4-fight deal with UFC

MMA JUNKIE PHOTO
Frank "The Crank" Camacho, left, hits China's Jingliang Li during their Ultimate Fighting Championship bout in Singapore in 2017.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Frank "The Crank" Camacho is guaranteed to see action in the Ultimate Fighting Championship again after signing a four-fight deal with the American mixed martial arts promotion company.

"I signed another four-fight deal with the UFC. I am so blessed for the opportunity," said Camacho, who first forged an agreement with the Las Vegas-based company in June 2017 when he fought China's Jingliang Li in Singapore.

"The goal for the next four fights is to finish with four wins and climb the ranks. Now that I've been with the UFC for a year, I've set new goals, including fighting a Top 10 level guy in the world by the end of my four-fight contract," the Marianas pride said.

The welterweight fighter has yet to find out when his first fight this year will be or who will be his opponent. However, his preparations for the new season have started and his team has made some changes in his training methods.

"Training is going well. Started the year great. I am really focusing on what I've learned in my past few fights. The four fights have gone by so quick. My coaches, my team, my dad, and I are making adjustments for 2019," said Camacho, who had a 1-3 record at UFC, earning his lone victory in November 2017 after outclassing (split decision) Australian Damien Brown in Sydney.

He added that by signing up with UFC anew and representing the Marianas, he hopes to continue bringing pride to the islands.

"I want the world to know where the Marianas is on the map. I know I can do this by showing our fighting spirit," the Trench Tech standout said.

Camacho announced his re-

See 'CRANK' on Page 26

GCA vs Agape in finale today

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

This is it.

After being pushed back several times, the title game between Grace Christian Academy 1 and Agape Christian School 1 in the middle school division of the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Volleyball League will be finally played, as the opposing squads collide in the 4:30pm match today at the Saipan International School court in As Lito.

The defending champions Eagles will be seeking a three-peat versus Agape. GCA 1 also aims to keep its perfect record in the middle school division, as the school's top team was undefeated in the past two years and was also unscathed in the elimination round of the current season. The Eagles went on to stretch their winning streak and advanced to the finals after beating Mt. Carmel School 1 in the semis.

The Cesar Libut-coached GCA 1 held a training session yesterday, leaving no stone unturned as far as its preparation for the one-game finals is concerned. Libut had to miss the Eagles high

See GCA on Page 26

ROBY PAMINTUAN
A Grace Christian Academy 1 player serves during an earlier game against Agape Christian School 1 in the middle school division of the CCOPSA volleyball league at the GCA court in Navy Hill.

Carol drops doubles match in Australia

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four-time NMSA/TSL Foundation Student Athlete of the Year Carol Lee got the early boot in the doubles play in the 2019 AGL Loy Yang Traralgon Junior International.

Lee partnered with India's Shivani Amineni and they were beaten by No. 7 seed Kamila Bartone of Latvia and Guilia Morlet of France in straight sets, 6-2, 6-4, of the first round match last Saturday at the hard court of the Traralgon Tennis Association in Victoria, Australia.

The AGL Loy Yang Traralgon Junior International was Lee's first competition this season and despite the loss she will remain in the Land Down Under, as she hopes to play in the qualifying tournament for the 2019 Australian Open Junior Championships. The qualifier will take place on Jan. 16 and 17, while the main draw games both in the singles and doubles will run from Jan. 19 to 26.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Carol Lee, seen here playing in an ITF Juniors event on Saipan, dropped her doubles match in the 2019 AGL Loy Yang Traralgon Junior International in Australia last weekend.

The 17-year-old Lee is one of the 26 players on the acceptance list for the qualifying tournament and the lone representative from the Pacific. Italy, Great Britain, Russia, the U.S., Georgia, Poland, Australia, South Korea, Japan, India, New Zealand, Indonesia, and Finland have players, too entered in the qualifier.

For the main draw of the 64-player singles field, world No. 4 Clara Tauson of Den-

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